

# NEW YORK Saturday Star Journal

A POPULAR PAPER FOR PLEASURE & PROFIT

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1872, by BEADLE AND COMPANY, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

Vol. III.

E. F. Beadle,  
William Adams,  
David Adams,  
PUBLISHERS.

NEW YORK, MARCH 23, 1872.

TERMS IN ADVANCE: One copy, four months, \$1.00.  
One copy, one year, . . . 3.00.  
Two copies, one year, . . . 5.00.

No. 106.

## THE PICTURE ON THE PANE.

BY MALCOLM TAYLOR, JR.

The artist, Frost, in my fancy's eye,  
On the pane did a picture paint;  
With a whisk of wind, from the pallet sky,  
He took a pure vapor tint,  
And touched, with the power of a magic wand,  
On the window, a wintry scene—  
A view of a vale in his native land,  
Where one season stays serene.  
A field of floss, woods of stalactites,  
With a fallen crystalline snag,  
A glassy glacier 'twixt icebergs' heights,  
With a cave and a shelving crag;  
On the jutting cliff, a young maiden, down  
On her knees, for frozen, knelt,  
Arrayed in an elder woven gown,  
And a cloak of fleecy felt.  
While issuing from the hollow lair,  
With a grinning mouth and growl,  
A gaunt and great white polar bear,  
Scanned her with hungry scowl;  
Beneath, anigh to the icicle wold,  
In the snag's scintillating light,  
In position stood, so firm and bold,  
A valiant Norseman knight.  
Who in armor clad of silver sheen,  
And snowy skirt of the Gaelic garb,  
At the bear leveled, with true aim keen,  
A long, bright steel lance's barb;  
Such the scene that Frost on my pane did paint,  
In which fancy found delight,  
Till the critic, Sunlight, made it faint,  
When it faded from my sight.

## Madeleine's Marriage:

OR,  
THE HEIR OF BROADHURST.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLET,  
AUTHOR OF "UNDER THE CLOUD."

### CHAPTER V.

#### THE ROBBERY AND THE SUSPICION.

The evening had advanced, and the moon was shining brightly, when a man, wrapped in a cloak, alighted from a stage-coach that passed within a short distance from Mr. Morell's house. His step was stealthy, and almost noiseless; he kept himself as much as possible in the shadow of trees that grew on one side of the road, and quickened his pace when crossing an unsheltered space. His hat was pulled over his brow, and while his cloak was so held up as to cover the lower part of his face, it would have been difficult even for an acquaintance to recognize him.

His steps grew uncertain as he approached Morell's door. He stopped and listened; then, turned aside, and went up to one of the side windows that opened into the library. The moon shone full upon it; but there was no light within.

The man raised the window a little, then pushed it wide open.

Looking round as if to see that no one observed him, he put his hand on the sill, and, with a spring, leaped in at the window.

The room was partially lighted by the moon. The intruder listened carefully, stepping lightly to each door; then went up to the desk.

He drew a key from his vest-pocket, which he inserted in the lock with the manner of one who knows that the key will fit the lock.

He opened the desk, and hastily examined its different compartments.

Apparently he was disappointed in the search; for he muttered curses as he threw down the papers taken up. He was in search of a document he could not find.

At last, pulling open a small drawer, he suddenly perceived and seized a pocket-book, which he opened, uttering an audible chuckle as he clutched its contents—a parcel of Bank of England notes. Pocketing these, he flung down the pocket-book, shut the drawer, and closed and locked the desk; laughing a low laugh as he did so, and muttering:

"No will!—but she shall bear the blame."

The robber turned to the window by which he had entered. As he looked out and saw the shadow of two figures advancing upon the lawn, he started back.

"The stairs!—the roof!" he exclaimed; and in the same breath darted up the stairs, drawing the door to after him. The sound of his light steps were heard as he ascended the stairs, but soon died away, and all was silence.

It was but a moment after, that Mr. Morell and Madeleine entered the library.

The latter rung for lights. A single lamp was placed on the table. Morell walked the library to and fro for some minutes, while the girl sat musing and silent.

At length the old man said:

"I have had an afternoon's work with my lawyer, Madeleine; and you had a part in our deliberations."

"I—sir?" questioned the young girl.

"I am growing old, you know, and very feeble at times, and not over-patient; a dull, moody companion for you; a chilly sort of old bachelor—"

"Do not say so," interrupted Madeleine, with a bright smile, looking full in his face.

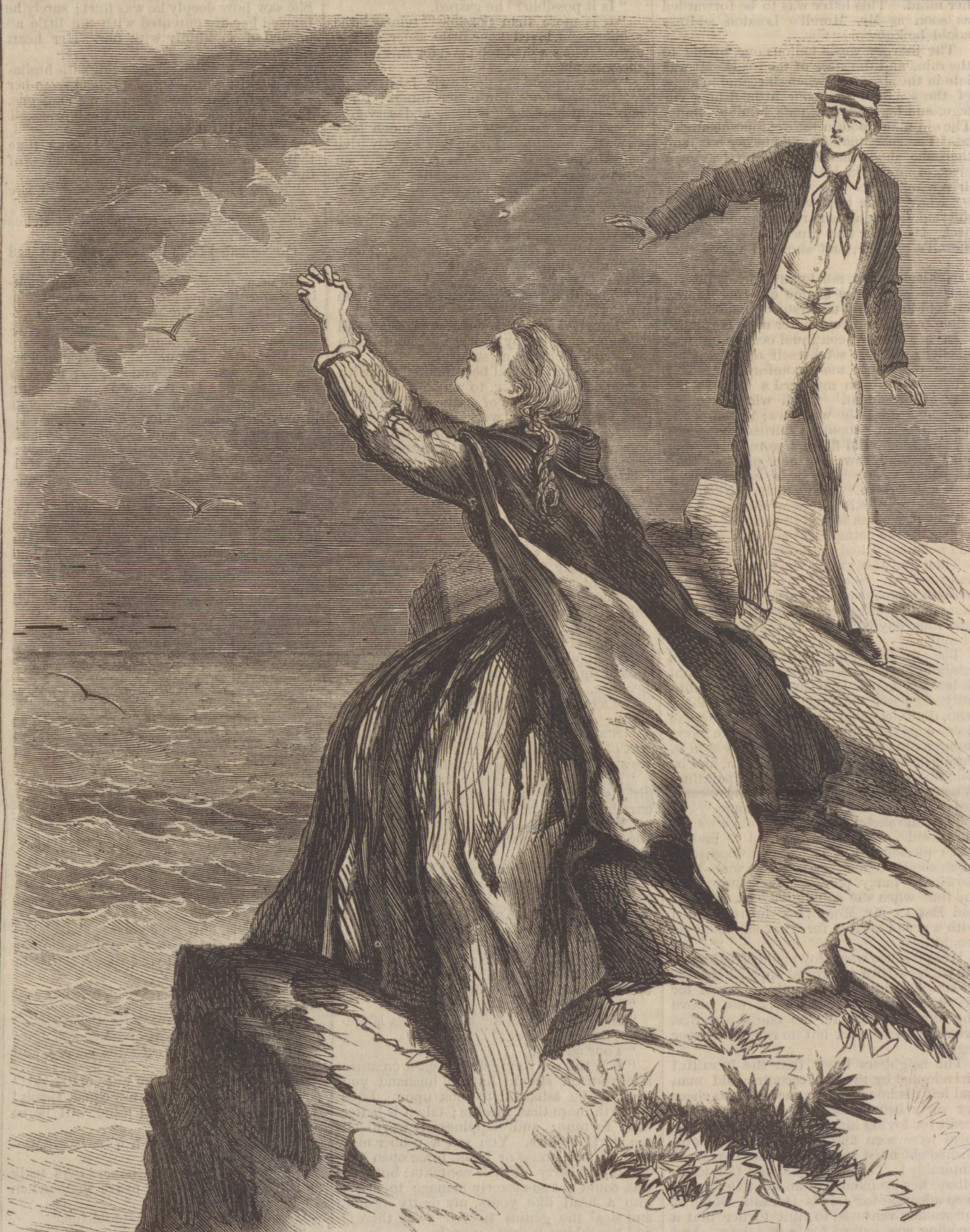
"You would hardly believe that I had ever been a hopeful, ardent man, full of energy and alive to passion?"

She saw that her old friend was in one of his gloomy moods, and strove to cheer him. Some further talk about the past ensued, with allusions that brought tears to her eyes.

Morell continued:

"I had two disappointments. One was the conduct of my profligate nephew—but enough of him. I destroyed the old will to-day, and made a new one, leaving you my whole property."

"Oh, sir—you must not—I hope you will



"Oh, mamma! mamma!" she sobbed, "how I wish I could go to you!"

not—deprive your nephew of the means of redeeming his good name!"

"You talk like a foolish girl. Albert was a gambler. He committed forgery. One leads to the other."

Madeleine sighed deeply. There had been too much sadness in her own young life, that she should not feel for the unhappy.

Morell went on: "Let a man slip the rein on his integrity in money matters, and I would not give a finger-snap for his principles in any thing."

The girl held out her hands as if to arrest the fatal judgment.

"The fallen may rise again," she said, gently.

"I do not believe it. Inflexible honesty is to a man what virtue is to a woman. It must never be doubted. But I did not want to talk about the scapegrace, whom you never knew. As I said, you are my heiress. The will secures your rights as my adopted daughter. I am going for some weeks to London. I start to-morrow morning. I shall take a house in town for the winter. You are not far from seventeen now, Madeleine, and you have been carefully educated. It is time you saw more of society than you can see here."

The girl's eyes sparkled.

"I see you will like that. Is it not so?"

"It has always been like a dream, sir, to see London."

"You shall see it in its pleasant aspect. I never meant to keep you moping here. Would you not like beautiful dresses, and gay company, and admiration, eh?"

Madeleine laughed. "I have been very foolish," she answered, with a blush, "to think of such things."

"It was natural for a young girl. No doubt your mother had all those advantages."

"Mamma had very pretty dresses, I remember," said the girl. "But she never wore them. We lived in such a retired manner."

"Have you no recollection of your life in England?"

"A very faint one. I can not tell if it is

my own memory, or what my mother has told me. But I have fancied I remembered a beautiful country house with trees, and water."

"You know nothing of your relatives?"

"Ah, no, sir. Mr. Morgan advertised for them, but nothing ever came of it."

"It was as well," muttered the cynical man. "But you are of gentle blood, Madeleine; and I mean you to dress and live like one born a lady."

"You are kind, sir."

"Only one restraint I must put upon you. I do not wish you to have any association hereafter with those Dorants."

The girl started and looked up at him as if she did not understand his words.

"You hear me, girl; you must forget that part of your life."

"Forget it, sir! I should be most ungrateful to do so."

"No nonsense! I have indulged you in your sentimental visits to the old fisherman; but they must not be repeated. His son was here to-day."

The girl was silent.

"Was not the young man in this house, and did you not see him?" demanded Morell, fixing his eyes on the maiden.

"He was here for a few moments," she faltered, in reply.

"To ask you for money?"

"No, indeed!" exclaimed Madeleine, indignantly. "He brought back my necklace and locket, which I had left for his father. He refused to take any thing from me!"

"Noble disinterestedness!" exclaimed the old man, ironically. "What was his object, then?"

"To bid me farewell. He is going away!"

"Ah, he does a little of the sentimental, does he? Now listen, Madeleine. You are my adopted daughter. I choose that your associates shall be of your own sphere, and that no low friends shall be tolerated. You are my heiress; but understand me, I have provided that no transfer can at any time be made of my substance. You can not help those needy people with supplies, as you may have done."

"Never! never!" cried the girl, sobbing.

"They would take nothing from me, much as I owe them."

"As I said—my agent will pay for every thing in my absence, till I take you to London. Girls never know how to lay out money. You may dress and spend as you please; but those people must not presume on a service rendered to claim your acquaintance."

"Oh, sir!" exclaimed Madeleine, "they saved my life! They gave me a home for years, when I was only a troublesome child! How could I ever forget all they have done?"

"You must forget it. If this young man is allowed to visit you, the next thing he may be wanting to marry you!"

A scarlet flush swept across the girl's face.

"He would think it a suitable match, no doubt; and the share in my money quite a desirable thing!"

The girl uttered a stifled cry, and stretched out her hands as if imploring silence.

"The thing has gone too far already," muttered the cynic, "with these sentimental farewells and pathetic reminiscences. Madeleine, you are a sensible girl. You will move in a better sphere; you will be richly endowed—"

"I would rather not, sir, accept your generosity on such terms," said the young girl, meekly drooping her head.

"What do you mean?"

"Oh, Mr. Morell!" exclaimed Madeleine, with rising emotion. "To the latest hour of my life I shall remember what you have done for me. But to turn my back on him who has been a father to me—to treat with scorn one who has been as a brother—"

"And would be more than one?" added the old man.

"He never said so!—he has never thought of such a thing!" exclaimed the girl, again coloring painfully.

Morell mused a moment.

"If the old man," he said, "had no one to provide for him, I should not object to his having a small allowance. I do not like the younger one; he has the airs of a gen-

tleman. No! I shall do what I choose with my own. We shall hear nothing of them in London, and I will shut up this house."

He had risen and was pacing the floor again. Alice came quietly into the room. She did not perceive the master of the house at first.

"I found Mr. Dorant," she said to her young mistress, "just before the train was leaving. He wrote this scrap on the back of your note, and—"

She stopped suddenly, as Mr. Morell came into view from the shadows in the room. The sudden pause aroused his suspicions.

"So," he said, wheeling round, and facing the two. "A dispatch from young Dorant! Well—Alice?"

"I thought Miss Madeleine was alone, sir—"

said the maid, hesitatingly.

"Is it any thing I should not know? Speak out!"

"Go on, Alice," said her mistress.

"And—and—Mr. Dorant was very glad indeed of the money, and sent back what was over in the cover of your note."

Madeleine took it mechanically.

"Money?" she repeated. "I sent him no money!"

"Has he gone away?" inquired Mr. Morell.

"Yes, sir; by the last train," answered the maid. And she left the room, while Madeleine still held the letter.

She could in no way understand it.

"What can it mean?" she murmured.

"Will you allow me?" asked Morell, reaching out his hand for the letter. She gave it, and he took it, and read it aloud:

"DEAR MADELEINE:

"After all, I am glad of the timely aid. In your haste you sent a hundred and twenty pounds; I return the twenty. I will send the amount from Antwerp."

Lewis."

"So—so!" exclaimed Morell. "A hundred and twenty pounds! A large sum for even a young spendthrift to owe—and receive so romantically. There is a mystery, it seems, about the matter. Will you explain it?"

"I can not," replied Madeleine. "I do not understand it at all."

"You sent it to him. You do not deny that?"

"I did not send it! I sent only the letter of Mr. Long's clerk, saying he had left the country. There was no money in my letter."

"Yet Alice carried it to him?"

"Yes—and he took it from her hand. I can not comprehend it."

The old man resumed his walk.

"A-ha!" he exclaimed at length, suddenly stopping. "A light breaks on me! Madeleine—looking sternly at her—"I remember that, a day or two since, I placed a sum of money in your care. You may give it me now, if you please."

"Certainly, sir."

The girl rose, and there was a tone of relief in her voice. She glanced at Mr. Morell, and the terrible truth flashed upon her. It was like an icy chill running from head to foot.

"Is it possible," she said to herself, "that he can suspect me of taking it?"

She drew out the key, opened the desk and the drawer with trembling hands, and gave the pocket-book to Mr. Morell.

He examined it coolly; then laid it down.

"It is as I suspected. The money is gone."

"WHAT!" was Madeleine's startled exclamation.

"This pocket-book," said Morell, "when I gave it to you, contained one hundred and fifty pounds."

"I know it did."

"There is no money here!"

"You are mistaken, sir! It is all there! I locked it up, and I have kept the key in my own possession! No one can have touched it!"

She snatched the pocket-book, and turned over the leaves in violent agitation.

"You see it is gone!" said the old man, calmly.

"But it must be here! It may have fallen out."

The poor girl searched the desk rapidly, trembling in every limb.

"Madeleine!" cried Morell, "do not attempt to deceive me! I know that you have sent this money to those Dorants!"

Madeleine gave a sharp cry; let the pocket-book fall, and stood gazing in bewildered terror at her accuser. At length she sobbed:

"Oh, Mr. Morell! can you charge me with so base a crime?"

"Can you deny it?" he replied. "Here is the note you sent, from Mr. Long's clerk. Here is the envelope of your letter, in which the twenty pounds are returned. Is not that your handwriting?"

"It is—I am sure it is!" faltered the poor girl, looking at it.

"Madeleine, you dare not deny the theft?"

"I do—I do!" she cried. "As I live—I declare it to you—I swear it to you! I swear it by the memory of my mother!"

Morell turned away from the passionate protestations of innocence she continued to pour forth.

"Your part is well acted!" was his only answer to her sobbing reiteration.

"I am innocent! It is some horrible dream!"

"Enough of hypocrisy!" he said, angrily. "In face of such proof!" and he held the envelope before her.

Madeleine gazed at it, trying to remember what might explain it; but shook her head.



She could not doubt it was her own handwriting. (She knew, too, how ardently she had wished she had just that sum to give Louis; and how she had secretly cherished the hope of obtaining the loan from Mr. Morell.) But she knew that she would have died a death of lingering torture rather than touch what was not her own.

Again Morell paced the floor, and again stopped in front of her. She seemed to him to be accomplished in hypocrisy.

"Listen to me, Madeleine," he said. "I can pardon one evil act, if followed by repentance. I will forgive you, if you will prove your sincerity by a full confession, and promise me never to see those people again!"

"Confess—that I have committed a base robbery!" exclaimed the girl. "Never! Never! I was in need of the money for Louis. I meant to ask you for it! But this terrible accusation—it is false! I would prefer death to such a shame! Could I stand here and look you in the face if I had been guilty? You do not believe me, sir! May Heaven forgive you!"

"Madeleine!"

The young girl drew herself up with a pride she had never shown before. Her color came back; her eyes flashed defiance through her tears.

"I own it, sir," she said, "appearances are against me! You may crush me with these proofs; you may send me to prison! The world may trample on and scorn me! But, in spite of all, I am innocent!"

"You mistake me," said Morell. "I will spare you disgrace. He held the envelope and note to the lamp, and let them burn close to his fingers, throwing the charred fragments on the floor.

"Once more I offer full pardon if you will confess. You refuse? Well, no human being shall hear the story from my lips. I shall be silent forever. No one shall ever know the cause of our separation. I will give you the means of living in retirement. You can remain here till my return from London, when all shall be arranged."

He moved toward the door. Madeleine rushed after him.

"Do not leave me in anger!" she cried. "Give me time to prove that I am not the guilty wretch you think me!"

The old man turned away, refusing to relent.

"It will grieve you, sir, when you know how you have wronged me! Only give me time! Do not break my heart! Let me see you when you return—my benefactor? I have never deserved your contempt! Never! never!"

She clung to him as he crossed the room to take up his hat and cloak.

"I shall not return here," he answered, coldly. "I will not see you again."

As she still clung to him, sobbing, he pushed her from him with violence, and went out hastily. As the door closed upon him, Madeleine tottered back and sunk into a chair, covering her face with her hands.

The door leading up the stairs was softly opened, and the strange man, who had entered by the window, appeared. He had found the door fastened which led to the roof, and he descended to the only means of egress.

He passed to the window, on which the brilliant moonlight lay like a sheet of silver.

Madeleine saw the robber, uttered a wild shriek, sprang up and ran to stop him.

"Hush!" he whispered, showing a pistol.

"A strange man! The robber!" she cried, and screamed again loudly for help, while she seized the man's arm and strove to detain him.

"Let me go, or it will be worse for you! Let me go!" he exclaimed aloud.

Breaking from her hold, he leaped on the window-seat. The moon shone full upon his face, so that the girl could see it distinctly before he leaped down outside. She followed in time to see him run across the lawn behind some buildings. Then she rushed to the door to alarm the household. But her voice would not utter the cry that rose to her lips; it died in a faint murmur, as she sunk on the floor in a swoon.

#### CHAPTER VI. PLIGHTED LOVE.

ALICE found her mistress still lying on the floor in the library. Lifting her up tenderly, she placed her in a chair, and held a glass of water to her lips. Madeleine could only murmur a petition to be taken to her own room. The maid undressed her, helped her to bed, and bathed her forehead with cold water.

It was some time before the poor girl could collect her scattered faculties. Then she told the maid she had been terrified by a robber who had been concealed in the stairway, and who sprang from the window. No one else in the house had seen him. The wild hope that had fluttered at her heart, of proving her innocence to Mr. Morell, faded away. He would refuse to believe that she had seen any robber. He would accuse her of another falsehood to cover the guilt of theft!

She could not bring herself to speak with her maid of the horrible suspicions attached to herself.

For long hours, after dismissing the servant, she sat and reflected what she should do. To remain under Mr. Morell's roof, charged with so base a crime, she could not and would not. She would leave his house; she would go back to her early benefactor, Mr. Dorant. He was alone. She would stay and work for him. She packed in a box a few of her plainest dresses, taking none of the best, nor a single piece of jewelry given her by Mr. Morell. When all was done, she lay down weary, and sunk into troubled slumber.

It was late when she awoke. Alice was standing by the bedside, with a cup of tea and biscuits on a silver tray. Madeleine looked startled, sprang up, and asked for Mr. Morell.

"He has been gone this hour," answered the maid.

"Gone!" and left no word for her!

No letter had been left: only a message through the butler, that he hoped Miss Winchester would make herself comfortable in the house during his absence. The agent and solicitor, in the village, was instructed to supply every thing that she might need.

The girl begged her young mistress to lie down and sleep again. Why should she be disturbed after a restless night!

"Please to order the carriage in an hour," said Madeleine.

"But it is raining, Miss Madeleine; surely you do not think of going out to drive."

"I am going away, Alice—forever!" She pointed to the trunk in the middle of the floor.

Alice stood aghast. She comprehended at length that there had been some quarrel

between her master and young mistress; and that it was on account of the handsome young gentleman who had visited her. Perhaps he was a lover, and Mr. Morell refused his consent, and her young lady was determined to marry him! Like all girls, Alice had her sympathies for true love, and she strove to comfort her suffering mistress.

But Madeleine was only anxious to leave the house to which she felt she had no longer a right. Swelling with a sense of wrong, she was thankful that she had yet a home to which she could go. She drank the tea, and ate a morsel of food; dressed herself hurriedly for the journey; read a chapter in her little Bible, and knelt to supplicate Divine protection. By the time the carriage was at the door, she was fully equipped.

She parted from Alice with tears; the rest had no idea that she was leaving the house for any length of time. She left a letter thanking Mr. Morell for his great kindness, but refusing to receive his bounty so long as he believed her guilty of a crime abhorrent to her. She hoped in time to be able to pay back the sum he had lost, and thus convince him of her innocence. She had a plan for this, hardly yet matured in her mind. This letter was to be forwarded as soon as Mr. Morell's London address could be known.

The journey was a tedious one, owing to the rains and the state of the roads. It was late in the afternoon when she came in sight of the sea and the poor little fishing village, and her foster-father's humble home. The old man stood in the door as she alighted. The coachman brought in her box, and then she shook hands with him, leaving a piece of money in his, and the carriage was driven off.

"I have come to stay with you—father," she said, throwing her arms around Dorant's neck. It was the first time since she became Morell's protegee, that she had called him so.

Neither to him, nor to any one, could she bear to reveal the shame clinging to her. The old man only understood that she was unhappy, and welcomed her most cordially.

In her sorrow, continual occupation was a relief; and she set herself at once to arrange the house more comfortably. Her artistic taste even managed a little in the way of ornament. Fresh white curtains were hung over the windows; the carpet in the little sitting-room was turned and mended, and fresh wild flowers were every day put into the brown earthen pitchers that served as vases; the beds underwent a thorough reform. In the little garden the industry promised to work wonders, and the narrow lawn was fenced in under her directions; till the cottage had an air of comfort and neatness it had not known in years.

Then for the grand work on which she had resolved. She had brought with her her easel, canvas and painting implements. She would work hard, and sell her pictures, and thus pay back the lost money to Mr. Morell.

The first painting that she did was a miniature, the likeness of a wild, but not ill-looking man. Her memory had faithfully retained the features of the robber who, doubtless, had stolen the money she was accused of purloining. As the moon shone on his face, she had distinctly seen it. Perhaps she might meet him again, and be able to prove his guilt by the painting. When it was finished she laid it away carefully, inclosed in a little ebony frame.

Then she sketched a number of views by the sea-side. She was surprised to find so much pleasure in these occupations; and when she thought—young as she was—how glowing fancy pictured the future!—of the time when she could give back what she had lost to Mr. Morell, her heart swelled with a proud sorrow for what she knew he would feel.

Her presence was a joy to old Mr. Dorant. He partook with improved appetite the little simple dainties her hands prepared for his meals every day. She felt not above any sort of labor; for the one shame that pressed on her heart left no room for lesser regrets.

The neighbors knew that the beautiful girl adopted by the rich eccentric old man had left his house, and come back to cheer her early benefactor; and they gave her credit for loving him very much. Her pictures were seen and praised; how accomplished she must be, to sketch and paint so admirably! The gossips did not fail to attribute her preference of an humble lot to a deep affection for Lewis Dorant. Some of the women ventured to hint to her that a wedding was looked for in due time. And Madeleine, though she blushed, was not displeased. The sore anguish at her heart made welcome to her the idea of change, though as yet she had never asked herself if she loved, nor felt conscious of a preference.

So months passed, and not a word was heard from Mr. Morell. He had manifestly acquiesced in Madeleine's determination, and believing her utterly unworthy of his care, troubled himself no further about her. By accident she heard afterward that his health was in a precarious condition, and that he had gone to the Highlands.

So ended that fair episode of her life; her dreams of a brilliant lot! of the protecting love of a father.

Lewis Dorant heard of the change, and that Madeleine was living with his father; the light of his little household. He wrote again and again, and sent remittances. Madeleine sold a few of her pictures in a village a few miles distant, and continued to hope for better success.

After a few months more—in the depth of the winter—the young man returned to his home.

Madeleine was hardly prepared for the alteration in his appearance. His form was tall and powerful; his face was bronzed by exposure and travel, but he had grown very handsome. There was a depth of expression in his brown eyes; his curls, beard and luxuriant locks were carefully trimmed, and his dress was that of a gentleman.

He was accompanied by a military-looking man, middle-aged, and lively in manners. He was an officer, had seen years of service abroad, and had left his son in Paris to acquire a military education. The cottage was too small for his accommodation, and he insisted on staying at the little inn in the village. But every day he came to meet Lewis, and they took long walks together.

One afternoon they came into the little sitting-room while Madeleine was in the kitchen, preparing supper.

"I expect answers to my letters to-morrow," Lieutenant Duclos—for that was the stranger's name—was saying. "My determination to go is irrevocable."

Lewis laughed.

"I suppose you thought there were only two irrevocable things in the world, eh?—this red spot over my left eyebrow, and the twist in my legs! Heigho! I wish I were as handsome as you, Dorant!"

"Is it possible, you can covet any thing belonging to me?"

"Indeed I do—and you may guess the reason why."

"I can not, upon my word."

"Tell me," asked Duclos, after a pause—"when a woman marries, is it absolutely necessary that she should adore her husband? If he is very ugly, it seems to me her simple liking would be quite sufficient!"

Lewis looked puzzled at him.

"Now, I know of a fellow in love, who has a scrap of money, too; but he is comically ugly."

"Surely—you can not mean—"

"Yes, do! The murderer's out!" exclaimed Duclos. "Don't laugh at me! I know I'm a ridiculous figure for a lover, but I should make a rather presentable husband. I don't look so ridiculous in the chimney corner when the lights are down! I would not ask the girl to love me!"

Pale as death, Dorant started to his feet.

"Is it possible?" he gasped.

"It is more than possible!" retorted the soldier. "I loved your little sister at first sight. She's a deal too good for this out-of-the-way place."

"She is indeed!" said Lewis, faintly. "She was born for better things; for a handsome house, a carriage, and servants, and as many fine dresses and as much jewelry as she wants. I can not exactly give her all these just now; but I can offer an independence—snug apartments in Paris, and my pay; with a prospect of prize-money and all that."

"That is better than she has here!" said the young man, bitterly.

"And the carriage and servants, and jewelry, may all come in time!" cried the impetuous lover.

"You think she would care for such things?"

"Care! What girl would not? She shall be happy; as happy as she can, with such an incumbrance as myself!"

His declaration had been poured out with a conical impetuosity, to which a deep sincerity gave a degree of pathos. Madeleine had suspended her work, and listened intently, with cheeks from which every vestige of color had fled. A minute or two elapsed before Lewis answered his friend:

"If you can make her happy, Lieutenant Duclos—then—I pray Heaven to bless you!"

He wrung the soldier's hand, and hastily quitted the room and the house. Madeleine heard his words and sunk into a seat, covering her face with her hands. She could not analyze the emotions that overwhelmed her, but they were the most painful she had ever experienced.

The door communicating between the two rooms was flung open. The military figure stood beside her, and when the girl looked up, it was to meet his eyes fixed on her face.

Madeleine gave a scream, and started up to fly.

Duclos laid his hand on her arm.

"Stay, Miss Madeleine!" he said, with a sort of calm authority she knew not how to resist. "I wish to speak with you."

"Pray, sir, pray excuse me!" cried the girl, struggling to prevent herself from bursting into tears.

"You need not be afraid of me, child. I know you have overheard all I have been saying."

"I could not help it, indeed, sir."

"I know you could not; I have a way of speaking out loud. Well—I never have any thing to hide. And I saw how the land lay when you chap went out."

"Lieutenant Duclos—"

"I will not let you go yet, my lass! You know, without my telling you, you ought to have an answer for your suitor."

"I entreat you, sir—"

"Shall I give you my advice, Miss Madeleine, on the subject?"

"Your advice?"

"It is this: a young and elegant creature like yourself should have a husband you need not be ashamed to look upon. Love is worth more than income; talent is better than fortune; and happiness is worth all the world besides. You see, a robber may break into a house or bank, force open the chests and carry off their contents; but robbers could not so cleverly manage to break into a head like yours, my pretty friend, and steal the genius stowed away there!"

and the soldier laughed merrily.

Madeleine colored and looked down. She thought it a very odd style of wooing, and wished herself anywhere else.

"I have no fancy, my dear young lady, for being a rejected suitor. So I will draw my pretensions, hoping to sneak as quietly as possible into my safe character of the family friend."

The girl did not know whether to take the whole thing as a jest, or as half in earnest; but she inclined to the first. She looked up with such a clear smile on her face, that Duclos saw at once how hopeless his suit would have been.

"I am a great fool," he muttered, "as well as the ugliest wretch on earth! I ought to go among the Hottentots, or the Esquimaux. It would be an amusements to hunt for somebody more ill-favored than myself."

He made no opposition to the pretty Madeleine's leaving the room. She fled to her own in the low-roofed attic, where she remained more than an hour, till dusk set in, and she had to go down and arrange the supper-table.

Lewis did not come in that evening. There seemed a weight on the spirits of all in the house.

The next day he took Duclos to the coach-office five miles distant—a horse being hired at the little inn in the fishing-village.

For the first time since her return, Madeleine felt very unhappy. She went about her tasks wearily and mechanically; and when they were completed, instead of sitting down to her painting as usual, she threw on her cloak and hood, and went out to walk on the bluff.

The day was still, but the sea moaned heavily, as if charged with the tempest that was to chafe its waves into fury in a few hours. Madeleine seated herself near the edge of the cliff, and looked down on the scattered boulders beneath her, covered with ragged seaweed brought by the tide at flood. It was a dreary sight to see the chafing billows break into foam at their feet. She tried to recall the time when she, with her mother, was at the mercy of the maddened ocean in a vessel doomed to destruction.

She remembered how the poor lady had clasped her in her arms and prayed aloud that her child might be saved from death. The incidents of that voyage passed of her lost ones with unutterable longing. "Oh, mamma! mamma!" she sobbed, clasping her hands and lifting her streaming eyes upward, "how I wish I could go to you!"

She did not see the tall form standing a little behind her, with melancholy gaze fixed on her. For some minutes she sat, weeping quietly; and, then, seeing that the sky was darkening, she rose to return home.

Dorant rushed forward and caught her hand in both his. It was trembling and cold.

"You are not well, Madeleine!" he said, in a low, deep tone of emotion. "You have worked too hard at your painting."

"If I could only find a regular market for my pictures," answered the girl, "I should not mind the labor. It does me good—no harm."

After a pause, dropping her hand, the young man said, with something of bitterness:

"Madeleine, you are ambitious."

"I have a task to perform," she replied. She saw how deeply he was hurt; surely he fancied her discontented with the little all he shared so kindly with her. Her heart smote her.

"I have a grief," she said, with hesitation, for the words seemed forced from her—"which I have never shared with any one. There is but one way to lift the burden. I must work till that is done."

"Madeleine, I have seen for some time that you are not well. Is it some distress of the mind?"

"It is, Lewis. Do not ask me to say more."

"You are grieving for the loss of riches and station?"

The scornful flash of her eyes answered him.

He drew nearer and bent over her, looking earnestly in her face. She could not misunderstand him; she was moved by his expressive looks. Her thoughts came involuntarily from their depths.

"Madeleine, I would never have spoken when you were rich and happy; I would have died first; for I know I am not your equal. But you must have known—you know now—I have so long loved you!"

The girl started, and her cheek flushed deeply. Her eyes drooped to the ground; but she felt that the young man was still gazing at her; that he waited for her answer.

He took her hand, pressing it tenderly. Gently, but firmly, she withdrew it, and he stepped back; a shade of mortification swept over his face. She saw that he had misunderstood her; and now she was forced to speak.

"I said I had a secret grief; I will tell you more; it is a secret of shame!"

The color flashed over Dorant's face, and his eyes glittered an instant, then softened into tender reproach. He did not believe her.

Madeleine went on in a sort of desperation:

"What if I tell you of a wrong done me; of my being branded with a horrible accusation—so terrible, that you ought to shrink from me!"

Dorant was deadly pale, but he firmly uttered the word—"Impossible!"

"Suppose you were told I was guilty?"

"I would spurn the calumny, and punish the slanderer!"

"But no proof were offered?"

"I would not credit it. I would not believe aught against your purity from your own lips!"

"Oh, Lewis, how good you are!" exclaimed the young girl, in tears, and clasping her hands. "I am glad there are such hearts in the world!"

"Dearest Madeleine, tell me what you mean?"

"I shall be free—free from the curse—" she murmured in a sort of ecstasy, half to herself—"when I can earn the money, and replace it."

"My darling! if I were but your equal!"

"You are more than my equal, Lewis! Your name is unsullied! mine will be so again one day!"

"What do you mean? who has dared sully your name?"

"I never deserved it—never! As truly as I live—never! I can prove that—when I have the money!"

"You speak in riddles, Madeleine."

"Lewis, I can not load you with such a burden. The wife of an honest man ought to stand beside him free from the taint of suspicion."

Again I entreat you, tell me what you mean! If money is needed, let us work together, if only—oh, Madeleine—if you will be my wife!"

The girl gave him a look; there was a flash of joy in her eyes, but it faded presently to an expression of deep pain.

"Oh, Madeleine, is my love so worthless that it meets no welcome?"

Again she lifted her eyes to his.

"Your heart speaks for me!" he pleaded. The unutterable love in his eyes stirred the very soul of the young girl. With sudden energy she laid her head on his shoulder.

"I can not conceal any thing from you," she said, quickly. "While I lived with Mr. Morell he entrusted money to my keeping. A robber came at night and stole it from his desk, where I had put it. Mr. Morell charged me with the theft."

"The villain!"

"Appearances justified him. I could not prove my innocence. No one saw the robber but myself."

"You saw him, then?"

"I did; and lest I should die before he was discovered, I painted his portrait from memory. Let us go home, and I will show it to you."

She took his arm, and hurried him back to the cottage. Leaving him in the sitting-room, she ran up stairs and returned with the miniature. It was that of a handsome young man, with marked features, pale with the effects of excess.

Dorant started violently when he saw it.

"Do you know the face?" asked Madeleine.

"I do know it!" he cried, with emotion. "It is Albert Morell!"

"I never saw him but that once, as the moon shone on him in the window."

"I will take this to Mr. Morell immediately!" said Lewis. "I will demand—"

"No—no—you shall not!" cried the girl. "Mr. Morell has been silent. No one knows that he has come off, nor why I left his house. He has gone away from home. He has

spared me; and I shall not bear the shame forever. I shall earn enough to replace the sum lost, and then he will believe me."

"Noble girl!"

"I would not have told you of this, Lewis, but—you loved me in spite of suspicion."

"Loved you, Madeleine! I have worshipped you! But you were so far above me! You may one day find your kindred, and then you will despise me, perhaps—"

"Oh, Lewis!"

"I am not as well educated as you are! How can I dare ask you to be mine?"

"You know a great deal more than I do, Lewis," the girl answered, with a smile.

"About the sea, perhaps, and fishing-crafts. You have had masters; you are accomplished; you would grace a palace! I have often thought, Madeleine, if your relatives should turn out to be rich and titled, you would make them proud of you, even if you came from one of these huts into their drawing-rooms."

"I shall never find my relations, Lewis. I do not care for them. I have your father, and—"

"Will you be my wife, then, darling? Let me share your toil! or, why should you work? I am strong, and will work for you."

Such generous trust conquered all resistance.

They sat for hours, hand in hand, talking over plans for the future. The old man, entering by the kitchen way, heard their voices, and would not disturb them. He seated himself by the fire with his pipe, waiting patiently till it should occur to his pretty housekeeper that no supper had yet been prepared for the family.

Madeleine had not been able to bring herself to the disclosure that the money received by Lewis was the same taken by the robber. She could not bear to distress him by such a knowledge. Part of the hideous truth sufficed.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 105.)

## The Red Mazeppa: OR, THE MADMAN OF THE PLAINS.

A STRANGE STORY OF THE TEXAN FRONTIER!

[THE STORY OF DRAMATIZATION RESERVED.]

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,  
AUTHOR OF "OVERLAND KID," "A WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING," "ACE OF SPADES," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

A MARVELOUS APPEARANCE.

THE Mustang could not repress an exclamation of awe as he gazed upon the mystic light. Despite his cool head and



clump of timber which sheltered the whites, but some half a mile or so to the right of it. The Indians gazed in wonder not unmixed with horror at the strange sight.

"Wah! it is strange!" said Ah-ha-la, a solemn expression upon his face.

"What can it be?" muttered the chief, in utter amazement, but on his face was no sign of fear.

"The totem of the Evil Spirit!" cried one of the Indians, in a fright.

"More like a white-skin trick to frighten us from our prey!" exclaimed the White Mustang, in contempt. It was plain that he did not share in the fear that was rapidly taking possession of the breasts of his followers, at the sudden appearance of the strange blue flame.

"A trick!" said Ah-ha-la, knitting his brows in doubt.

"Why not?" questioned the White Mustang, quickly. "Have not the white-skinned made the powder which flashes a crimson flame and forces the leaden ball through the air? Why should they not make a blue flame as well?"

A grunt of assent from the savages told the chief that his words had weight.

"Why not?" said the Little Dog, slowly. "Why should the Evil Spirit come to help the whites?" demanded the White Mustang, fiercely. "What have they done that they can call the spirits from the spirit-land to aid them? Nothing! It is a trick to frighten us away."

"What will the chief do?" asked Ah-ha-la.

"Take two warriors and ride yonder," and the Indian waved his hand defiantly toward where the blue flame danced in the air.

The Indians looked in each other's faces in doubt. It was plain that not one of them possessed the daring of the White Mustang.

"Wah! it is good," said Ah-ha-la, slowly.

While the chief rides onward with two warriors, the rest will remain here. Who rides with the chief?

For a moment there was silence; Ah-ha-la urged his mustang forward.

"Ah-ha-la is a great warrior," said the brave, slowly. "He will ride with the White Mustang even if he rides to the Spirit Land."

The example was not lost on the rest, for the Little Dog immediately took his place by the side of the other.

"The Little Dog is sick of the sky; he, too, will ride with his brothers—even to the Spirit Land."

A gleam of pride sparkled in the dark eyes of the Indian chief as he noted the devotion of his braves.

"It is good. Let the rest of my braves remain here. The Comanche chiefs will blow out the white-man's trick-flame, and then ride in and hunt him from his hiding-place in the bushes."

Side by side, the three chiefs rode toward the mystic flame.

Fittingly it hovered on the air, now burning but dimly, and anon shooting a long, tongue-like flame up into the darkness of the night.

As the chiefs rode on they noticed that the strange light seemed advancing toward them. Steadily it came on.

The eyes of the mustangs caught sight of the flickering flame. They no longer felt the rein or the touch of the Indian heel. Snorting in fright, they gazed upon the strange sight. They came to a stand-still, and stubbornly refused to budge a single step onward; trembling in every limb with fear, they strove to retreat. With hand and foot the chiefs urged them on; the effort was fruitless, for fright had taken possession of every sense. The horses reared, pawed the ground, and strove to fly.

Even the iron hearts of the chiefs—nerved to ride to death—began to falter. The instinct of fear is catching; the beasts communicated it to the humans who bestrode them.

Then, suddenly as the flash of the lightning, the prairie was illuminated. A strange red light made all around as visible as by day.

A strange sight was there indeed for mortal eyes to gaze upon.

The prairie island with its growth of stunted timber; by it the two hunters, mounted for flight; the Mustang bearing the girl before him on the brown mare; in the center of the prairie the Comanches, picture-like, grouped together; a half-mile from them the three chiefs, vainly striving to restrain their frightened steeds; a half-mile further on, the Madman of the Plains, mounted on the sturdy charger; around his head, like a wreath of victory, played the blue flame, shooting upward from his disheveled locks into the air; in each outstretched hand he held a ball of fire, the flame from which lighted up the prairie.

His wild, discordant laugh rung out shrilly on the clear air of the night.

For a second only the Indians gazed upon the fearful sight, and then, with courage gone, they fled over the prairie with headlong speed. Even the White Mustang fled with the rest, and yet it was more the horse's will that bore him along than his own; for, desperate, he would have faced the spectral flames, and with his naked hands grappled with the fearful being who seemed a son of fire.

A minute more, and darkness again covered the prairie.

## CHAPTER XV.

## BANDERA'S PLAN.

BANDERA conducted the young Mexican along the road until they were fairly out of earshot of the hacienda.

The old Mexican glanced carefully around him, as if to assure himself that there were no listeners near. Apparently satisfied that no spy kept watch upon them, he spoke.

"I am satisfied that, in some strange way, this American adventurer has caught the fancy of Gualda. I confess I can not understand it, for I would as soon have thought that she would have fallen in love with a peon slave. But it is the truth, and as a truth we must prepare to meet it. Of course it is but a girl's fancy; the attachment has sprung up too suddenly to be anything else. Once the American is removed from her sight, she will soon forget him; but as long as he remains here, so that she has the chance of seeing him daily—and that we can not prevent—the fancy is likely to grow upon her, little by little, until it absorbs her whole life."

"Your plan, then, is to remove the American?"

"Yes."

"As I told you but a moment ago, he is now on an expedition of danger," Tordilla

said. "I will frankly confess to you that I have noticed the intimacy existing between your daughter and this foreign scoundrel, and it has chafed me. Therefore I took occasion to banter the American about his skill as a mustanger—that is the occupation he follows, you know—and I dared him to attempt the capture of the wild horse whom the herdsmen call the Lightning."

"In hopes that the American would fail, and, discomfited by the failure, leave this part of the country?"

"Partly so, and partly in hopes that the wild horse might wound or kill him, as he has already done with so many of our best herdsmen who have attempted his capture."

"The chance is small; the American may succeed in capturing the horse, or even if he fails, may escape unhurt. It will hardly do to trust to accident in a difficult case like this."

"What do you suggest?" asked the young man. "Shall I seize an early opportunity to fasten a quarrel upon him, and trust to the chances of a duel to remove this dangerous rival?"

"In a duel the chances are even," Bandera replied, shrewdly. "The Mustang is as likely to kill thee as thou to kill him."

Besides, why should you give this lad a chance for his life? When you meet a snake on the prairie, you crush it at once with your heel. This man is a snake in your path; bruise his head then without giving him a chance to turn and sting you. This is my counsel; is it not good?"

"Yes, you are right; but what method shall I adopt to remove him?"

"That will require thought," Bandera said, slowly. "I do not suppose, from what I have seen of the fellow, that he can be frightened away easily."

"Oh, no!" cried Tordilla, quickly; "the brief conversation that I had with him in regard to the capture of the wild horse has convinced me that nothing can be made by the use of threats."

"As I thought; but I have a plan. You have heard of the three hunters known as the White Indians?"

"Yes; the outlaws who have a hiding-place somewhere along the Segó, above us here?"

"Exactly," Bandera replied; "these three hunters, although not strictly beyond the pale of the law, are yet suspected of many a desperate deed. Report says that the prey they hunt is oftener men than deer."

"Yes, I have heard so."

"Now, my plan is this. If report speaks true, these men will not hesitate to perform any act of blood, provided that they are well paid for it. Now then, you must seek them out in their hiding-place near the Segó, describe to them the person of the American, and offer them a good round sum to induce him to leave this part of the country. No doubt they will gladly accept, and the probabilities are that the arguments they will use with him will be so powerful that he can not fail to see their force and will depart."

"And their arguments—what do you suppose they will be?" asked the young man, with a smile.

"An ounce-bell, with a heavy charge of powder to back it up, or else a keen-edged hunting-knife and a stout arm to wield it," replied Bandera, significantly.

"Arguments such as those you mention seldom fail."

"They will not in this case, rest assured. Once get the White Indians to pledge their word that the American shall disappear, they'll keep their promise, though they have to dog him down to his death as the hunter tracks the deer."

"Where can I find these men who use such strong arguments?" Tordilla asked.

"They have a retreat near the bank of the river, some few miles above us here; a cave, I believe, where, like the wolves, they have found a lair. One of my herdsmen here is a trusty fellow; I'll dispatch him in search of these men, or perhaps you do not care to be known in the affair at all. In that case it can all be arranged through the herdsmen."

"That will be the better course," Tordilla said, quickly. "I confess I do not care to have any dealings with such fellows if I can avoid it. What will be the cost of this service—can you guess?"

"That will depend upon the humor of these rascals, but it will probably be high. The American is young, strong, a thorough prairie-man, and one not likely to be put out of the way without some trouble."

"I care very little for the price so that the result be attained," Tordilla said, carelessly.

"Let their price be what it will, I am content to pay it, if they will but remove this dangerous rival from my path."

"If they undertake the task, they will accomplish it, never fear!" exclaimed Bandera, confidently.

"To-morrow at this same hour," replied Bandera, after thinking for a moment.

"That will give me time to send the herdsmen to these argumentative gentlemen and learn their terms for this service."

"Very well, to-morrow then at this hour I will return."

"Yes."

Then the two turned and retraced their steps to the house. Tordilla sprang into the saddle, waved his hand courteously to Bandera and galloped away.

"The American is doomed!" muttered Bandera, a look of satisfaction stealing over his dark features. "After I have placed the White Indians on his track he may say good-by to earth and prepare for another world."

As Bandera stood by the gateway buried in thought, the sound of footsteps approaching roused him from his reverie. Looking up he beheld Diego, the keeper of the little wine-shop.

Diego removed his sombrero and made a low bow as he drew near to Bandera. The old man gravely returned his salute.

"Senor, I am your humble servant," said the wine-seller.

"You wish to see me, senor?" Bandera asked.

"Yes, senor, I seek your counsel. You remember my father, Diego, who formerly kept the wine-shop now kept me?"

"Yes, quite well."

"My father, as you are probably well aware, was not a rich man, yet he possessed a strange leaden casket curiously sealed."

"Well, often, since I came to years of understanding, have I wondered what that strangely-fashioned casket could possibly contain. I knew that it was neither gold or silver, for it was quite light for its size. My father often jokingly said that it contained a secret which would some day make his fortune. A short time ago my father died."

"And you opened the casket?" asked

Bandera, who, in reality, felt but little interest in the Mexican's story.

"No, senor," cried Diego; "now comes the mystery. The leaden casket was not left to me with the wine-shop and the rest of my father's valuables, but given to the Mission priest, Father Philip, with strict injunctions to preserve it intact until a certain man called Lope, who was formerly a herdsmen attached to the hacienda here, should return and claim it."

Bandera was all attention now, yet he strove to restrain his eagerness so as not to excite the suspicions of his informant.

"I suppose that it has never been claimed?" he said, carelessly.

"Oh, but it has!" cried Diego, in haste; "this very day, this man Lope presented himself at my house and asked for my father; learning that he was dead and that the casket was in the hands of the Mission priest, he has departed to claim it. Now, senor, if there be any valuable secret connected with this casket, I think I am entitled to a share of it."

"You are most certainly; I will give the matter my personal attention and see that you are not wronged."

Diego departed in joy, leaving Bandera biting his lips in rage. He had guessed the secret that the casket contained.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## A WILY MOVEMENT.

In a small adobe cottage near the rustic chapel by the Segó, dwelt the good father, Philip, known far and wide as the Mission priest.

The sun was sinking slowly in the west, its last rich, warm rays bathing town, plain and river in a flood of golden light.

The Mission priest, a portly, jolly-looking father, short in stature, and with a face whose rosy hue told plainly of good living and of freedom from worldly cares, sat beneath the shadow of a clump of cactuses smoking a cigarette. His attitude—his face, betrayed that he was at peace with himself and all the world.

Calmly he sat and calmly he smoked. A horseman dashing up at full gallop disturbed his peaceful meditations.

Looking up, the good father beheld Ponce de Bandera. With an exclamation of surprise the priest sprang to his feet, for like all the rest of the inhabitants of Dhanis, he had a high respect for stern Bandera.

Ponce dismounted, and casting the rein over his horse's neck, approached the priest.

"Good-even, father," he said.

"Peace be with you, my son," the monk replied.

"Father, I seek your assistance."

"You shall have it, worthy senor," replied the priest, in some little surprise, for he could not possibly imagine what the proud and wealthy Bandera could want of him.

"Will you enter my humble abode?"

"I follow you, father."

The two entered the little cottage. The priest brought a stool for his visitor, then another for himself, and the two men sat down, face to face.

"Father, you are often intrusted with deathbed confidences?"

"Yes, my son," and the priest opened his eyes in astonishment at the strange beginning.

"Those made under the seal of the confessional are of course sacred, but those revealed to you as from man to man—and Bandera paused.

"Sacred also, of course," said the priest, a peculiar twinkle in his little eyes; he began to have an idea that Bandera's visit might be turned to good advantage. The monk was but human.

"Sacred, unless some one comes to you and presents a good and sufficient reason why you should speak."

"My son, the world does not belie you when it gives you credit for possessing great wisdom," the worthy father said, smilingly.

"To come to the point then, for I foresee that we shall understand each other without difficulty, you were present at the deathbed of Diego, the keeper of the wine-shop?"

The priest stared in the face of Bandera in astonishment.

"May the saints preserve us, but this is strange," he muttered. "Yes, you are right," he said, aloud, "I was present."

"And he intrusted a secret to your care?"

The monk again stared in the face of his visitor.

"Santa Maria! but this is wonderful!" he exclaimed. "You are the second one today who has come to inquire in regard to the trust confided to me by old Diego."

A flush of rage swept over the haughty features of Bandera.

"Caramba, I am too late then!" he muttered, between his teeth.

"Too late!" cried the monk, in astonishment, catching the muttered words that had fallen from the lips of his visitor.

"Will you tell me all that you know in regard to this affair? The secret that Diego intrusted to your care concerned a certain leaden casket, did it not?" Bandera said.

"Yes, senor."

"And you have parted with the casket?"

"Senor, I never had it!" cried the monk.

"What? did not Diego before he died intrust the casket to you?" asked Bandera, in surprise.

"Not the casket, worthy son, only the secret of the casket."

"What it contained?"

"No, where it was hid."

"Ah! he had placed it in a place of concealment, then?"

Exactly, and that is the secret that he intrusted to my care. When a certain person came to me I was to tell him where the casket was hid. This person, it seems, some years ago was obliged to leave this neighborhood suddenly, and not wishing to take the casket with him he gave it to Diego with a solemn injunction that he was to make provision for its safe disposal with me in case any thing happened to him."

"And the person who placed this casket in the hands of Diego was a man called Lope, who was formerly a herdsmen on my estate?"

"Exactly; son, your knowledge is wonderful!" exclaimed the priest, lifting his fat hands in astonishment.

"And Lope the herdsmen has come, satisfied you of his identity, and you have given him the clue by means of which he can possess himself of the casket?"

"Right again, worthy son."

"Of course you were paid for keeping this secret?"

"Certainly—five golden ounces; such was the bargain agreed upon by Diego and myself, and Lope satisfied the debt on the instant."

"Did you know this man?"

"Well, in former years. He has been

much changed though by the lapse of time."

Bandera remained silent in thought for a few moments.

The priest watched him with a stolid face, but there was a peculiar twinkle in his shrewd little eyes.

"Is the spot where the casket is concealed far from here?" Bandera asked, at length.

"Not so very far, senor; say three hours' ride."

"Father, I have an idea that in some way this secret contained in the leaden casket, is of importance to me. I would not attempt to bribe you, father, to do aught but what was strictly right for the world; but if you think that you do not violate a sacred confidence by telling me where this leaden casket is hid, I will bestow upon your chapel ten golden ounces, you to make such disposition of them as may seem fit."

The monk smiled blandly, and rubbed his soft, brown palms together caressingly.

"My son, you are ever generous. I do not see what is to prevent me from acting in this matter. I have kept the secret of the leaden casket securely locked in my own breast. The man Lope has come, received his secret, and departed. I have kept my trust, the affair is ended. I think that I am free to tell you all that you may wish to know."

Silently, Bandera drew forth his leathern purse and counted ten golden ounces into the fat monk's hand. The eyes of the Mission priest sparkled with delight.

"Ah, senor, would that all were as liberal as you," he murmured.

"Now, speak."

"You know where the Sabinal passes through the Gate to Hell and debouches upon the prairie?"

"Yes."

"Where the ruined mission-house stands by the river?"

"Yes," again said Bandera, eagerly.

"In the dry well, not ten paces from the ruined house, the casket is concealed."

"In the well?"

"Yes, two stones placed together at the bottom of the well, the casket placed between, and then another stone placed on the top."

"You are sure that there is no mistake?"

"None whatever; I took down the direction from Diego's own lips."

"A strange hiding-place," said Bandera, rising to depart.

"Yes; Diego was something of a hunter and given to wandering on the prairie. I can not guess, my son, what the casket contains, but neither gold or silver, of that I am sure, for I once held it in my hand and it was quite light."

"How long is it since this Lope was here?"

"Barely two hours, senor; you are close upon his heels."

"Do you think that he departed instantly in search of the casket?"

"I am sure that he did not," replied the priest, confidently. "He inquired concerning the locality where the old mission-house is situated. The spot has changed greatly since he was here some ten or fifteen years ago. Then it was the outpost of a line of smiling homes extending from Dhanis thither; but since that time the red heretics, the Comanches, have come with plume and brand and transformed the peaceful garden into a howling wilderness. Where once the mission bell summoned the peons to holy prayer, the howl of the coyote and the cry of the panther ring in the air. I told the stranger of the danger attending his quest, and he replied that he should procure arms. That of course will take time."

"Yes, father, perchance you have done me a great service; if you ever need a favor at my hands command me."

A minute more and Bandera was in the saddle riding onward with a fierce joy thrilling his heart.

"Oh, my darling friend, who robs the panther of his name, you shall be waited for at the old mission-house, and instead of a casket find a grave there!" Bandera cried.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 102.)

## A Prophecy.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"FORGIVE me, Olive Pearlfield? Be friends again? Never, so help me Heaven, unless, indeed, I relent, I forgive you on my dying bed, or beside yours!"

She shivered like a dying gazelle, and wrung her white hands in direst anguish.

She was passively lovely as she stood before him, her eyes unnaturally bright with the unshed tears that filled their gray wells, her face pallid almost to grayness, and her exquisitely-cut lips—lips he had so often kissed with love's passionate adoration; red then, and warm and moist, but quivering now in an agony that seemed the very concentrated essence of human woe.

He was fully a head taller than she, and he was looking down upon her, in her beauty, her penitence, with a superior sort of way that added wormwood to the gall of her bitterness.

He was a lordly man; one of those proud, passionate natures that can not brook restraint, that will be all, or nothing, to the woman beloved. And this haughty, unforgiving man who worshipped Olive Pearlfield, and yet who would not let himself overlook and forgive, and forget, what she had done, had broken her heart with his cruel words, while he smiled at the dumb, dull agony they caused his own.

"I know I did wrong, Percival; I ought not have gone in direct opposition to your expressed wishes; but oh, Percival, if you knew how terrified I am at your wrath! if you knew how my heart breaks and bleeds because you will not forgive me! Percival, dear Percival, will you not forgive me? I did not mean to wound you; I never will again, never! Don't be cross to me, Percival; you'll be so sorry some day!"

She wound her white arms around his neck in suppliant entreaty; he felt the wet tears on her drooping lashes, the hot, quick breath from her eager, pleading lips; then he remembered that she had scorned his wishes, had defied his will—and the woman did not live who could afford to do that twice with Percival Rochester. And the cold, deliberate death-blow came gracefully from his mustached lips, as we have recorded it; and Olive Pearlfield and Percival Rochester parted, to walk separately the dense-dark road of gloom and despair ahead of them!

It was a darkened room, where the footstep fell noiselessly, and thoughtful-faced physicians stood beside the luce-canopied

bed in silent solemnity. All around were indications of wealth and refined luxury, and yet, powerless as the poorest laborer on his estate, Percival Rochester lay ill unto death, his grand beauty consumed with the fierce, fiery fever, and his manly strength fled from the hot contest for life.

He had not been a very happy man all those past months previous to his sudden, dangerous attack of typhoid fever. He had not been able to forget Olive, with her pleading, tearful eyes, and her wailing voice, as he had thought to be. She had haunted him, night and day, and now, while he lay in the prostrating reaction from hot delirium, he seemed to be thinking, thinking of her, till his brain grew wild and whirling again.

He didn't know, that proud, self-helpful man, how his nearest and best friends avoided his sick-chamber for fear lest they should come to be as he was; he little recked that, because there were none but heartless hired servants to minister healing to him, Azrael's dark shadow was closing close and closer upon him.

But it was so; he would die, and soon, unless miraculous care should woo back the coy life that fluttered on the threshold of Death's domain; and the gray-haired, gold-spectacled physicians, as they sat in pompous consultation around his pillows, declared it was by an especial interposition of Providence that Miss Pearlfield had just returned from abroad and at once volunteered her services as chief nurse.

More saintly than ever in her pure, girlish beauty, she glided about the chamber (of death was it to be?) of the man who had scorned her, and spurned her; the man whose forehead she bathed with life-giving waters; whose hot, restless hands grew cool and quiet under her firm, mesmeric touches.

She was idolizing Percival Rochester, even to the death; she had come, risking her own life to save his, all for love; and, with the tremendous influence of her never-dying affection, did she fight, step by step, for his precious life; that, in all probability, she was saving for some other woman.

Then, when there came a day that the doctors said he was out of danger; that friends might come to him without fear of infection; when the stare of delirium fled from his eyes, and reason and recognition resumed their throne and scepter, Olive Pearlfield kissed his pale forehead, and went away, silently, unostentatiously, as she had come.

The golden October days had brought to Percival Rochester his olden strength; and, with the glorious knowledge that he had again a fair lease of life, came a truth that was more precious still.

He had had a terrible conflict; he had fought as valiantly, as desperately over his iron will, his outrageous pride, as Olive Pearlfield had fought for his life. And he had won a tremendous victory; a victory over self, the grandest man can achieve.

So, in the purpling shades of that October eve, Percival Rochester sat, and thought of all they had told him of Olive's devotion to him, her wondrous skill, her self-denial and noble courage. His Olive! How his heart throbbed, first with bitter grief that he ever had wounded her so; then with joyful pride that he might win her for his over again; his very, very own, to whom he doubly belonged. He would go to her on the morrow, and not be ashamed to sue for her favor. He would go to her—ay, that very night, and learn the sweet news that she would be his once more.

So he called his carriage, and drove to the dear, well-remembered house, whose threshold he had not crossed for so long.

He rung the bell with a quick, joyous peal.

"Is Miss Pearlfield to be seen?"

The maid stared—he laughed down in his heart to see the wild surprise in her stolid face—and led him into the well-known parlors.

They were dim and still; they didn't seem like home, or Olive, and he turned



# Saturday Journal

Published every Monday morning at nine o'clock.

NEW YORK, MARCH 23, 1873.

The SATURDAY JOURNAL is sold by all Newsdealers in the United States and in the Canadian Dominion. Parties unable to obtain it from a newsdealer, or those preferring to have the paper sent direct, by mail, from the publication office, are supplied at the following rates:

**Terms to Subscribers:**  
One copy, four months \$1.00  
Two copies, one year 2.00  
In all orders for subscriptions be careful to give address in full—State, County and Town. The paper is always stopped, promptly, at expiration of subscription.  
Subscriptions can start with any required back number. The paper is always in print, so that those wishing for special stories can have them.  
All communications, subscriptions, and letters on business, should be addressed to  
**READER AND COMPANY, PUBLISHERS,**  
38 WILLIAM ST., NEW YORK.

## TO COMMENCE IN THE NEXT ISSUE, MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON'S

### Beautiful Heart and Hearth Romance, CECIL'S DECEIT;

#### OR, The Heiress of the Diamond Legacy.

At once highly dramatic and impressive in nature of story, this fine serial glows with that individualism, which, after all, is the truest test of authorial ability.

A terrible calamity starts a train of incidents so peculiar that, from the beginning, the reader is held spellbound. A beautiful woman assumes the name and character of her lovely young mistress, and walks a path of peril which enlists all the author's skill in its most forcible and exciting situations, and which awakens an interest so keen as to become, at times, almost painful.

The morale of the romance if not directly pointed out is none the less apparent. That deceit and unfaithfulness to a trust do not bring happiness and success, is made most significantly to appear.

The story will greatly delight all our readers. It is one of the favorite author's best contributions to our columns—which is, indeed, high praise.

We have the pleasure of announcing that we have now in hand a new serial from the brilliant dramatist and author,

#### MR. BARTLEY T. CAMPBELL,

—a story of unique merit and quality. The author's recent success in the theatrical world, with his fine drama "Pari," has brought his name now most prominently before the public, and this new work from his hand will be welcomed with zest. It is a story of a great city, to whose character we will advert in another issue.

## Our Arm-Chair.

**Cruel.**—An old maid wrote the following paragraph, we are sure:

"It was too bad in Dr. Holbrook, of the *Herald of Health*, to publish that gossiping story about a female physician in one of the large cities, whose income from her profession averages \$15,000 a year. 'She is a handsome woman of forty, clear headed, stent-hearted, strong-willed, vivacious and intellectual, and has maintained fine health during her many years of hard work.' There is not an unmarried woman in the medical profession, but will be content with offers to share her income. The members of the male persuasion are strangely apt to be fascinated with women who have an income. It is so convenient to have in the family, you know."

Who ever heard of a lady marrying a man for his income? Such a thing never was known. It is only the inviolable men who utter that aspersion on woman's disinterestedness. We hope the "doctress" referred to will feel duly indignant when any man "offers" himself.

**Very True.**—That it is true that virtue always is its own reward, is attested in the following authenticated instances:

"A policeman gave five dollars to the Chicago fund, and in less than an hour he found ten dollars in the pocket of a man whom he arrested. Another man was asked to contribute, but declined, and within two hours a dog bit him in the leg, and he heard that his mother-in-law had come to stay six months with him."

A friend of ours sat up one night with a friend of his who had a rash on his face, and he went home and had the small-pox. The pits on his face will ever be a sign that he was well rewarded for doing his duty.

We heard of another case where a cigar-vender sold a customer a villainous cigar. The customer lighted it but in disgust threw it down in the area. It set the house on fire and burned out that cigar-vender and some half-dozen others, which shows the danger of selling cheap cigars at a high price.

We could multiply instances, but these will suffice to confirm the truth of the old adage, that virtue is its own reward.

**One More Unfortunate.**—The Revolution is revolution no more. It expires with all its glory untarnished, but nevertheless expires—the publisher says for want of an editor, but the printer would probably say for want of something to live on.

This demise, if not expected, can excite no surprise, for, not as are the advocates for "Woman's Rights," the support which their several papers receive is so ridiculously small as to suggest the idea that all the women's rights folks are included in the stereotyped list of those who attend their conventions.

There still exist two or three weeklies that claim to champion woman's suffrage, as a specialty, but, were their only claim to support, they would soon write their own obituary—"died from want of breath."

This apathy does not argue well for "the Cause." If the agitators, after four years of stumping and canvassing, have to witness the decrease of their papers, and have the sorry sight of an empty treasury-box at all of their Conventions and Clubs, what can the next four years bring forth?

We are alarmed at the prospect and offer our condolences.

**A Literary Success.**—The success of Rev. T. De Witt Talmage's new book, viz.: "The Abominations of Modern Society," has been so marked as to excite much remark in "book circles." Five editions have been called for in three weeks. This shows that the

book market is neither dead nor asleep. All that readers want is a *live* work, which Dr. Talmage's volume is, in every sense. He discusses Social Sins in a manner to leave no misapprehension of his meaning. He writes, indeed, as he talks, with that bold, eloquent expression which has given him an enviable fame. We heartily wish that every young man and young woman in the land could read it; and will have it sent, post-paid, to any of our readers who see proper to remit us its price, \$1.50.

**The Coming Show.**—A fashion reporter says: "The old high Spanish 'back-comb' is coming in fashion again, and is made of gold studded with precious stones, or oxidized silver, or jet or tortoise-shell. It is very stylish and invariably becoming."

This only verifies the saying that "Fashion only repeats itself." Some of the combs which our mothers and grandmothers used to wear are veritable pieces of architecture, resembling a brown-stone front in the Renaissance style; and if these come into vogue again, woe to the race of turtles, and to the purses of husbands and fathers!

## CRIMINAL ABSURDITY.

A THOUGHTLESS girl of sixteen said, in my presence, a few days ago:

"What in the world makes a woman learn to use tobacco? How can she?"

"Why not a woman as well as a man?" I asked.

"Oh, because it looks so much worse for a woman," was the reply; "and, besides, a man wants such things worse than a woman does."

Now, wasn't that a thoroughly logical reply? It was thoroughly absurd, at any rate. But, that is just the way it is with "looks" so bad for a woman to do anything wrong, but it doesn't "look bad" for a man to do the same thing. And then, a man "wants such things worse." A high compliment that to the "superior" sex! Truly, gentlemen, your champions are not always discreet.

Because they have a greater desire to do evil is an excuse for them, is it? I would like to inquire if they have a greater inclination to bad habits by nature, or have they only acquired it by being allowed in them always?

I declare in favor of the latter. Ere was the mother evil, and the gentlemen, sorry, probably, because they were outdone by a woman in the beginning, were determined to be their share thereafter. So, some way, they began, years ago, telling the women that they had stronger propensities than women, and that they must allow them a little margin in consequence. Besides, it "looked worse" for a woman to smoke, chew, swear, get drunk, or be unchaste, than for a man.

The women, unfortunately, were foolish enough to believe it, and allow them quite as great a margin as they can desire. And as long habits become nature, so, to-day, very many women actually think that men possess stronger appetites than women, and, by some unaccountable process, they have also reached a point where they think that to indulge said appetites is an especial prerogative of manhood.

So far as the possession of them is concerned, they are, in many cases, not far wrong. Men frequently do possess them stronger than women—and why? Because they are allowed to pander to the worst parts of their nature almost unrestrainedly, and what is there that does not increase with cultivation? Nothing; and the grosser portion of a man's nature is constantly cultivated, almost from the cradle. What mother is there who feels the same anxiety for her boys that she feels for her girls? Every one knows that such mothers are few, very few. She feels that, if her daughters will only grow to womanhood, pure and virtuous, she will have nothing to regret. But, if her sons are not pure and virtuous, it is of comparatively little consequence.

Oh, it is as *wicked*, perhaps, for men, as well as women, to do the things commonly called wrong, but it doesn't *look* so bad. A woman's character, you know, is her all. How frequently is this heard! Yes, a woman's character is her all, and is not a man's character *his* all, as well? It certainly ought to be on earth, as it assuredly is in heaven, but it is not. If he has lost his honor, his purity and virtue, he receives the homage of the world the same. A man who smokes or chews tobacco, drinks liquor moderately, swears—if he doesn't do it in the presence of ladies, which no *gentleman* would—does not lose his honor. Heaven save the mark!—and an ornament to society. But, a woman with the same vices—what is she? A low, degraded, abandoned creature!

Why this difference? "Because," we are told, "man has stronger passions; and it looks worse for a woman to do these things!"

I am tired of this criminally absurd twaddle. It is time we were men and women, the noblest work of God, truly; the champions of right for right's own sake, and not the cringing slaves of barbarous customs and wrong. It is time we used the brains the Lord gave us, and used them to a purpose. It is time for us to live for something beside appearances. It was time ages ago, but since we failed to improve it, in Heaven's name let us begin now. Don't talk about sending missionaries to the heathen until we are ourselves civilized. If we can not offer the heathen a little good example along with the precept, we had better not offer them any thing.

LETTIE ARLEY IRONS.

## THE DAILY MAIL.

"Blessed be the man that invented sleep," quoth the immortal Sancho Panza. "Blessed be the man that invented letters!" added a gifted one, many years after.

And in this later day we lift our feeble voice and pipe out, "Blessed be the man that invented a daily mail!" Letters are delightful—especially love-letters—papers and magazines are good and spicy, but to be relished, they should be taken like champagne, fresh and frothy. If one must wait until the letters are old and the news is stale, it is like taking the wine after the sparkle is off and the foam gone; what is left is flat and tasteless.

But what a pleasure it is to open the letters still fresh and fragrant from the hands which sent them! Hands we love, perhaps—love, and long to clasp, but can not reach. And if sometimes we press upon the little paper links which hold us together, the kisses we would gladly press upon the warm, living, loving fingers, who shall chide our weakness?

How refreshing it is to unfold the papers still damp from the press, or forget every thing else in the interesting task of cutting the leaves of the new magazine, which has left its office and rushed with all the swiftness of steam, straight to our impatient hands!

"Blessings brighten as they take their flight," and we never knew how much we prized the daily mail until this week, when, for a few days we lost it. We live in a country village, but the great spider of civilization, spinning her busy web of iron tracks over the length and breadth of the land, has thrown a thread or two out our way, and every few hours her great fairy dragons come flying over the slender thread to do her errands. We hail their coming with delight, not terror, because twice every day they bring us tidings from absent dear ones, and news of the busy world, from which we are hidden away.

Every one looks for the arrival of the mail as the grand event of the day, for, ah! what personal possibilities hang upon its coming? And if one happens to be a scribbler and sometimes receives kind letters from generous editors, in which are inclosed crisp little notes, stamped with pretty "V's" and "X's," why, so much the better. For what doesn't come to-day may come to-morrow, and twenty-four hours isn't so long to wait.

But upon the first day of the present week, old Jack Frost gave us a sharp nip with his fingers, and scattered the snowflakes thick and fast in every nook and corner. And because we grumbled at that, he gave us another, to teach us that we must submit, and he sent down such a storm of snow that, oh! when we arose in the morning, we might have thought we had been carried away in our slumbers and waked up in a white world! The spider-web roads were hidden so fast and far under the frozen snow-drifts, that the fairy dragons could not find them, and huge and strong as they are, they are powerless and helpless unless they can follow the beaten track laid out for them.

So for several days they could not come to us at all, and when at length the way was clear, they became so confused that they ran hither and yonder, in a hopeless tangle, which nobody could straighten for a day or two more, and all this time we were waiting for our letters.

But an hour or so since we heard the welcome news that a mail had arrived at last! Joyfully we sent our small post-boy scampering off to the office, and even as I write I see him coming back as fast as his little legs will let him trot, bearing his precious burden.

There are no letters this time, but papers in plenty. Here is our chatty, story-telling friend, the STAR JOURNAL, with its wonderful pictures. Here is a paper from 'way down in Connecticut, and one from the Quaker City. And here, ah, here is a square, thick package—that is in the dear, absent paper's handwriting, and it is a book! Cut quickly, tediously, and tear loose, oh strongest and most provoking of wrapping paper! Ah, now out it comes, bright, green and shiny—Mrs. Stowe's "My Wife and I," as sure as I'm alive! Now, isn't that glorious? Papers and magazines one might withstand for a little while, but a book (and such a book) in a country village like this, where there is only a single book-store of about one-kitten power, and no circulating library, is a temptation beyond mortal might to resist!

Who could write essays, in the face of such persuasions? Dear reader, good-by! I am going to be a reader, too!

MATTIE DYER BRITTS.

## THE MORMON STAGE.

The "Lady of Lyons" in Utah—A Polygamist Claude Melnotte.

BY THE "FAT CONTRIBUTOR."

THERE is a Mormon theater in Utah where the drama is produced on strict polygamist principles. While the Gentile stage is content with one heroine, polygamist demands a dozen or more.

The season was opened not long ago with the "Lady of Lyons," somewhat changed to suit Mormon life. Although one Claude answered the purpose, there was a whole family of Paulines for him to make love to and wed. There being sixteen in all, they made it very lively for the gardener's son.

It required a wagon-load of flowers to provide them with bouquets in the first act. No wonder "the whole universe seemed filled with odors!" as Claude expresses it. It was a big job, too, painting their portraits—sixteen portraits—all from memory. When, finally, grown more bold, he "poured his worship into verse," he had to rack his brains with the composition of sixteen poems, which he sent by a messenger.

"Widow. And what answer do you expect, Claude?"

"Melnotte. That which the queens of Navarre sent to the poor Troubadour—Let us see the Oracle that can tell the nations we are beautiful! They will admit me—I shall hear them speak—I shall meet their sixteen pairs of eyes—I shall read upon their thirty-two cheeks the sweet thoughts that translate themselves into blushes. They will give me badges—flowers—gloves! Oh, rapture!" etc., etc.

The messenger returns with the information that, on the delivery of the verses, the sixteen young women pitched into him with out gloves and gave him an unmerciful drubbing, promising the same greeting to Melnotte if he dared to come that way.

Melnotte is introduced as the Prince of Como to the sixteen "Ladies of Lyons," and they all fall in love with him at once. It was a little embarrassing to Melnotte, in the second act, to promenade with his sixteen sweethearts and pour into their collective ears his tale of love. Yet, as a swarm of bees upon a young sapling, did they hang upon the honey of his eloquent tongue!

What a heavy coming down it was for those sixteen aspiring young ladies of Lyons to discover that, instead of a prince, they had married a poor gardener's son, as they did in the third act! His interview in his mother's humble cottage with the sixteen deceived and enraged females, who they discovered all, was a stormy one indeed. They laughed wildly as they shrieked:

"This is your palace, is it?"

"Where the perfumed light steals through the mists of alabaster lamps!" howled one, pointing a frantic finger at the solitary tallow candle spluttering on the mantel-piece.

"And every air is heavy with the sighs of orange groves!" snorted a second, hold-

ing her nose as the odor of the pig-sty came wafted through the window.

"And music of soft lutes!" hooted a third, stopping her ears with her fingers to shut out the squealing of the pigs.

"And murmur of low fountains!" screamed a fourth, kicking over a slop-bucket.

"That gush forth in the midst of roses!" shrieked a fifth, as she slung the bucket through a window into an adjacent cabbage-patch.

Then, as they pitched at him with one accord, tearing his hair out by the handful, and shrieking, "Dost thou like the picture?" the applause of the audience was terrific.

Growing calm at length they listen to his story, how he fell in love with them, as a boy when weeding out onions in their father's garden; how, when his verses were scorned, "the tempters found me a revengeful tool for their revenge." But he shouldn't claim his rights as a husband under the circumstances. They should sleep in peace, and to-morrow go home—the whole sixteen of them—pure and virgin as the snow.

It was an affecting tableau at the close of the act; Melnotte on his knees blessing them, and his sixteen wretchedly abused wives climbing a ladder into the loft, where they were obliged to sleep sixteen in a bed, taking the precaution, however, to haul the ladder up after them.

The remaining scenes were rendered equally effective. The baffled attempt of Beausant to induce Melnotte's sixteen wives to elope with him; the arrival of their parents, who take them home in a band wagon; and the final scene, in which Melnotte returns from fighting the Sioux Indians—where he had risen rapidly from soldier to Indian Commissioner—just in time to prevent his sixteen wives from marrying Beausant, to save their father from impending bankruptcy.

## Foolscap Papers.

### A Letter from Sarah Jane.

AT HOME,

February 20 sixt 18—

DEAR WASHY:

Your last letter which came two days before its date found me all well and the family doing the same with the exception of the little white calf which it is foundered having got at my milk pail while I was reading your last letter over again and never got over it yet I mean the calf, dearest.

A whole spelling-book couldn't furnish words enough to poor tray the exquisite pleasure I feel when Pete comes in and says "Sal here's another letter from that Washington Whiteington if you'll gim'ee fi cents I won't let pap. So I says "let me see the label on it" and it says "To Sary Jane"

The loving daughter of Melchisedek Peoples. Mr. Post Mister, if not called for or signed in ten days please write me why." So I give him five cents and grab the letter whether my hands are in the do or not and take it out of the envelop with smiling fingers and trembling face and read it clear through before I get to the end of it.

O your letters is so nice, they come like the flower of a thousand bams and are as cheering to my eyes as eye-save. If I am cast down they lift me up like a derriek. The sentiments and the spelling are so original and so sweet that I have quit using sugar in my coffee.

I am awfully glad that you were so pleasantly pleased over my last letter to you. I got it out of a book of somebody's letters and I have looked all through it again from the Prefix to the Finix to find another good one that would embody my feelings towards you who are the idle of my worship. You remember of the golden calf which Aaron set up on a marble pedestal for the Jute to fall down before and render omidge to. Well, such is mine.

My thoughts are ever of thee always and at all other times, and I get very absent-minded sometimes. Yesterday I was baking and thinking of you when I put the pies in the stove and the wood in the oven, and only this afternoon while I was trying to remember you I greased my face and painted my hair and brushed my teeth with the hair-brush.

I often think of the times when we used to rumble arm in arm up and down the lane and you would talk about going to Congress and to market, and how you used to say I was pretty as a picture on a paper-collar box, while the gentle Lunacy, as you said, was shining softly up in the starry firmament and the stars themselves wank in silence. That old lane is full of old memories and cattle and it would hardly be safe to promenade up and down it now, and when you gave me your last good-by down that lane you went. I can see you going down it now. The black ram was after you. You went with rapidness.

I can't thank you sufficiently enough for sending the last dogeritipe of yourself. I kissed it frequently after frequently and sometimes oftener and then between times. If you hadn't sneezed while the picture was taking and had refrained from winking one eye at the artist it would have been more perfect. The mustache was well taken; it looks like it had been mostly taken before the picture was. Why didn't you have the artist leave that sty out of your eye? he should have put it on the back ground of the picture and not on the frontispice as he did. But the head lacks nothing but a common comb to make it life-like.

Dearest Washy it has been sixteen months since you left, a long time indeed and I have every assurance to believe that if it keeps on this way it will be some time yet before I shall gaze transcendently into the blue debris of your eye-fall orbs and behold wehimently, "How are you, Washington!"

It is my prayer that you may return a hero crowned with sorrel, or laurel, and—also with some money which is very handy for poor young couples to set up housekeeping with. I think I should like to live in the city and be one of the *bon mots* and ride in a *cuepay* and have the servants dressed up in a livery-stable uniform, etc., etc.

If you can buy a Fifth avenue mansion cheap buy it by all means, though I much fear that it would have to be very cheap.

The tenderest wish of my affectionate heart is to oblong this letter but the scrubbing must be done.

Yours ever,

SARAH JANE.

POSTSCRIPT.—Please answer this letter as soon as you get it, or two or three days sooner if possible.

Ever again,

S. J.

## Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future orders.—Unavailable MSS. promptly returned, unless stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—Book MS. postage is two cents for every four ounces, or fraction thereof, but must be marked Book MS., and be sealed in wrappers with open end, in order to post the mails at "Book rates."—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package mailed as "Book MS."—MSS., which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of style; third, length. (Of course, on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, leaving off each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its folio or page number.—A rejection by us, and means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

We shall have to place on the list of *unavailables*, the following: "My Trip to Hainsboro," Story by Lizzie D.; "A Night of Terror," "The Wolf Chase," "Good-night," "My Philosopher," "Three Wishes," "A Tour through the Dread Pass," "My Wife's Cousin," "Never Told," "A Whipped Lie," "Sixteen and Seventy," "Jack Bentley's Rise," "The Flower in the Buttonhole," "Answer Me," etc., etc.

Will lay aside, for further consideration, the serials, "A Grave Crime," "The Enemy of a Year," "Grace Grosvenor's Sacrifice."

Sketches and long story by Mrs. K. A. P., we return for revisions suggested in note.

H. F. G. We do not care to make "engagements" of the kind alluded to. If you can write what we want we will "engage" it, but we invariably reserve the right of rejection of what does not fully come up to our requisitions.

C. A. L. We do not care to see the MS. referred to.

E. W. C. Have written you. The poem came from the village in which you live, and was subscribed by the name to which it was returned.

WALTER B. Any thing that is tasteful, either in jewelry or books, or pictures, or wearing apparel.

ARTHUR G. We know of no cure for headache but to remove its cause, which may be nervous weakness, get rid of the cause. If it is from biliousness or indigestion, get rid of the cause.

FRANK. The American News Co. will supply your wants.

CASAL MAN. "What would you do?" Why, go in and make yourself agreeable, of course!

JNO. K. L. "Low" comedians are not in requisition at any of the theaters, and, such as have engagements, are very poorly paid. Stay at home, if you can, it certainly is as good a place to earn a living in as New York.

OPERA. We have not the slightest idea where you can find market for your drama. No paper wants such matter, and theaters, nowadays, *manufacture* (that is the term to use) most of their pieces. Very few dramas of the "standard" kind are now introduced to the stage. A clear merit is sacrificed for scenic display or stage "hits."

SPORTSMAN. There is an English work on the training of dogs. It is sold by all general bookstores. The volume by Dinkley is excellent authority on Dogs and their Diseases.

We are really sorry to say nay to the contributions by Violet Lenore. Considering the motive which impels her to write, she ought to be perfectly satisfied, but what she sends is too *immature*. We can not say "write no more," for there is, in the prose composition, a grace of expression which argues well, only, give the art of composition, thorough study; write for home papers, and, after a while, success will come.

RICHARD DARRK. The American News Co., New York, will fill your order for Mayne Reid's "Cliff Climbers."

PENSEROSO. We think a girl foolish who will let a lover's inconstancy render her unhappy. Bring pride to your aid; let it see you are perfectly resigned to his absence; go with other young men and into society, which will not only cure your "dumps" but will bring back your inconstant if he really is your lover. Give up the idea of being revealing to young men the full depth of their affection. Such revelation should only come after engagement.

BOSTON GIRL. What is known as the Virginia Reel, was formerly danced in England under the name of "Sir Roger de Coverley." The dance may be formed of eight or more couples, standing in two lines, the gentlemen upon one side, the ladies upon the other, and the partners facing. The figures are executed as follows, commencing with the head lady and bottom gentleman: first, forward and back to places; again forward, and turn with right hand, back to places; then turn with left hand; then with both hands around the waist, and back to places; the lady then turns with her left hand every gentleman down the line, while the gentleman turns the ladies, the partners alternately turning each other with their right hand, when a *grand square* is promenade up and down and take places at bottom of the set. The next couple then commences, and so on through until all the dancers have had their "turn."

GEORGE AUGUSTUS. New York State has the largest population of any of the States in the Union, as it has 4,338,759 inhabitants, next to Ohio, with a population of 3,521,791 inhabitants; then Ohio, with 2,665,230; Illinois, 2,538,891. All of the other States are under 2,000,000. The smallest State, in population, is Nevada, with 82,681 inhabitants; next is Oregon, with a population of 90,923; and Nebraska, 122,968, and Delaware, with 125,015 inhabitants.

BELLE. The "Boston Dip" is a disgusting dance, originating in low dance-houses in London, and was first danced in this country by Boston young men, who learned it by keeping disreputable company abroad, and introduced it into respectable society here. Every respectable woman should resent it as an insult, if asked to dance it.

AUNT WINKIE. The best remedy to cure your nose of squinting, is to make your spectacles so arranged as to cause her to look in an opposite direction than the affected eye would turn. Have a plain glass in one side, and the *convex* in the other, and upon the other have a thin piece of iron put in the spectacle, having a small hole cut in the center of it; this will gradually direct the pupil of the eye to straight glass.

RURALIST. Good vinegar can be made as follows: to nine gallons of water add one gallon of molasses. Let the mixture stand for six weeks in an open barrel, laying a cloth over the top, and turning it daily. At the end of that time you will find you have excellent vinegar.

WALTER DENISON. The body of air, or atmosphere, around the earth, extends to a distance of about fifty miles from the earth's surface.

A YOUNG MISS. Not having to use garters, we can only judge from the hearsay of matrons; and, upon their opinion, would suggest that garters should wear their garters *close* to the knee, for the reason they do impede the circulation of the blood as they do when worn *below* the knee.

CLERK. In presenting a check for payment at a bank or firm, where you are unknown to the cashier, you should carry some one with you with whom the bankers are acquainted, and who can *vouch* for you. Thus you will avoid the mortification of being refused, and have to go off in search of some one to "identify" you.

MAT WENTWORTH. We do not think you should promenade Broadway alone, every Saturday afternoon. Your face will become *too common*.

ALEXANDER. The average amount of tea and coffee used per year, is estimated at 250,000,000 pounds of tea, and 130,000,000 pounds of coffee; this includes all the tea and coffee consumed in the most of the tea used comes from China, and about



## DISOWNED.

BY ARNOLD INLER.

Darkness surrounding me,  
Dark thoughts confounding me,  
Filling me with anguish;  
Cast out, down, ah me!  
Friendless, unknown, ah me!  
Left here alone, ah me!  
In pain to languish.

Though many pray for me,  
Not any stay for me,  
To cheer and befriend me;  
Oh! what are prayers to me,  
When no one cares for me,  
When no one dares for me,  
To speak and defend me!

True worldly charity,  
Is really a rarity,  
To a lost woman;  
Never befriending her,  
Kindly attending her,  
But ready for sending her  
To hell's unhuman.

But though Earth's no peace for me,  
The Savior has ease for me,  
Stored up in heaven;  
Though unprotected here,  
Scorned and rejected here,  
I'll be accepted there—  
Welcome and forgiven.

## Love's Sacrifice.

BY JENNIE D. BURTON.

THE sky was misty, gray and lowering. The wind swept through the tall weeds of the marshes with a dreary sound, rattling their dry stalks and scattering the fallen leaves far and wide. The lake lay a wide-spreading sheet, dull and dark, with stretches of sandy shore, and the hills rising one above another bleak and precipitous, and gloomy with their fringe of scrubby fuzes and stunted pines, rooted deep in the sterile soil.

A presage of snow was in the air. The bright Indian summer days had given place to this gloomiest of November weather, and the stretch of rough country, never pleasant, looked more desolate beneath the wintry aspect.

Thorpe Rayston, mounted on his great brown horse, came slowly down the lake-shore road, and turning sharply to the left, pursued his way up the ascent. He drew his collar closer about his throat, and touched the horse's flank with his slender riding-whip, as the chill blast struck him more keenly. It was scarcely a fitting time to indulge in a reverie, with the lowering sky and rising, moaning wind, giving unmistakable warning of a coming storm, but he had not been heading either in the absent frame of mind which had come upon him.

He roused up from his abstraction now, and with a glance about him pushed forward at a more rapid rate. It was late afternoon, and the early dusk of the short day would soon close down upon him.

Half-way up the mountain side, Cliffe House showed dimly against its background of furzy mountain scenery, its stone walls neutral-tinted, its arched windows, its deep-columned porches, and many-gabled roof, marking it as one of those substantial old dwellings which will defy the encroachments of time. As it appeared to him now, so Rayston could recall it in his earliest remembrances.

He drew rein as he approached the Cliffe boundaries, and his eye sought the coils of smoke—scarcely defined against the gray atmosphere—that rose here and there from the different chimneys.

"Surely the family must have returned," he said to himself, yet speaking aloud. "Strange that the neighborhood has not been astir with the news. I wonder—"

What he wondered he did not express, but he seemed in danger of relapsing into his former abstracted mood.

An interruption of his thoughts, pleasant or otherwise, came in the form of a stifled scream from behind the high wall which separated the Cliffe domain from the public thoroughfare. A woman's voice, followed by an inarticulate growl like a hoarsely uttered threat, and the dry grass of the inclosure rustling under the unequal fall of footsteps.

It seemed that foul-play of some kind was going on behind the sheltering wall.

Like a flash, Rayston was off his horse and scaling the gateway which at a little distance was set in the solid masonry. Within, a belt of ornamental trees or shrubbery obscured this part of the grounds from view of the house; and under protection of the leafless branches, an almost noiseless and unequal struggle was being prosecuted. A stalwart ruffian held a slender young girl in his rough grasp, one coarse hand pressed across her mouth, an arm thrown about her waist effectually preventing her efforts to escape him.

"You've got the pluck, my beauty," he was saying, in his low, gruff voice, not without a tinge of admiration expressed; "but it's no use, I tell yer. Just give in quietly and let me have them shiners off yer yerry arms an' white neck, and yer can go scot free for all o' me. Why, what a little cat it is!"

The man laughed mockingly. The girl's cloak had fallen or been torn off during the struggle. Her skirt of silk, wine red, and jacket of sable velvet, outlined a form slender and rounded, but supple and quick of motion, endowed now with the strength which desperation lends.

With a sudden, strong effort she had wrenched herself partially from his grasp, and gave utterance to a single shrill cry for help. With a muttered imprecation her captor's hand sought to smother the sound, but she caught at it and sunk her double row of glittering white teeth deep into the flesh. The pain inflicted made the man start back and relinquish his hold upon her.

She tore herself away from him, and at the same instant Thorpe Rayston's slender riding-whip descended in a torrent of sharp cutting blows about the ruffian's head and shoulders.

"Take that, you villain, for your insolence to this young lady! There, be off with you. Don't let me hear of you in the neighborhood if you value your immunity from iron bars and jail windows!"

The fellow needed no second bidding, but with a ferocious glance at his assailant which assured him that he had met with at least his match in bodily strength, slunk sullenly away. Then Rayston turned courteously to the girl for whose relief he had so opportunely appeared.

She stood flushed and panting, her big black eyes sparkling with indignant light. At her throat and upon her bare arms, from which the wide sleeves had fallen away, rubies gleamed red as blood. These were the spoils that had attracted her assailant.

"The scoundrel has had but part of his

deserts," Rayston said. "He should not have escaped so easily had he injured you in any way."

"Ah, but I would have him put in prison," cried the girl, angrily. "I would take vengeance for his vulgar insolence. I would take from him liberty, and give him in its place chains and hard labor and suffering."

Thorpe was amazed at her vehemence, but detecting her slight foreign accent, knew it was attributable to fiery Southern blood coursing through her veins. Hers was one of those impassioned natures whose likes and dislikes resolve themselves into the extremes of self-sacrifice and bitter persecution.

"You could scarcely succeed in inflicting such a punishment, much as he might deserve it," Thorpe replied, smilingly. "Can I be of any further service to you?"

"I have not thanked you, and you must not go, if that is what you mean. You must come to the house with me and let them show what gratitude they may for the aid you have rendered me."

Thorpe hesitated. "My horse is in the road," said he, "and I am already belated on my way. I have many miles' ride before me."

"Ah, but you must come," cried the girl, in her imperious foreign way. "Dusk is falling now, and you will have the darkness upon you all the same. Bring your horse into the stables and wait with us for the late moonrise. Here, Graham, take charge of the gentleman's horse."

A servant, appearing at a little distance in the grounds, came forward to obey her command.

Thorpe hesitated no longer, but turned his steps in the direction of the mansion. Some impulse stronger than that which the girl urged upon him had decided him.

Broad, granite-terrace steps led up through the grounds toward the house. Huge marble vases filled with glossy-leaved shrubs were placed on either side at regular intervals. Chrysanthemums reared their hardy blooms in the open beds of the terrace, where all other flowering plants had stripped off their bright array before the approach of winter. Evergreen shrubs stood in dark close-trimmed clumps here and there, but denuded as the place was of summer attractions, everywhere was evidenced the presence of thrift and wealth, and careful attendance.

Rayston's companion, tripping by his side up the granite steps, cast shy glances at him from beneath her long, dark lashes.

"I know you are wondering who is the distressed maiden you so opportunely rescued," said she, laughingly. "How awkward it is to introduce one's self. I am Petronella Castello Cliffe, and arrived two days ago at Cliffe House with my aunt, Ermengarde. She it is who must unite with me in thanking you, as grandpa Cliffe has not yet returned. Are you not meaning to be equally communicative regarding your personality?"

"Your pardon!" returned Rayston, a flush imperceptible in the gathering dusk sweeping over his cheek and brow. "I am only Thorpe Rayston, gentleman of much leisure and limited means, but with remarkably brilliant future prospects. I am not quite a stranger to the Cliffe family."

There was a reckless bitterness tingling his voice which drew the girl's gaze upon him in wondering surprise. But by this time they had reached the house, and she ushered him into the drawing-room already lighted for the evening.

Simultaneously with their entrance, an opposite door opened to admit a fair-haired, queenly woman, Ermengarde Cliffe. She was arrayed in a full dinner toilet of azure silk, with an over-dress of rich black lace. Pearls gleamed upon her arms, and were suspended in shimmering drops from her dainty ears.

She came forward to clasp hands cordially with Rayston, her calm eyes meeting his gaze with a quiet assurance that started his heart to throbbing wildly. At the same time he admitted to himself that the ten years which had elapsed since their last parting had only matured her from the freshness of budding loveliness into the perfect bloom of ripened womanhood.

Ten years ago and more he had given her all his heart so unreservedly that in all the intervening time he had bestowed no single thought upon any other woman. And for a brief space he had believed himself equally loved in return; then others came between; the young lovers were separated without even opportunity being given them to exchange pledges of constancy and faith. Yet now they met again, each untrammelled by other ties, with the possibility of the future lying an unwritten promise before them.

The storm which had been threatening broke with the coming night. Snowflakes skurried down so thickly that the brown earth was soon enveloped in a white, soft mantle, and the air was dense with the down-falling burden. Clearly, Thorpe Rayston could not pursue his journey that night.

It had reached the "wee sma' hours" which presage the dawn. Rayston had sought his couch hours before, but he had not slept. The fancies which banished slumber were pleasing ones, and he was giving himself unrestrainedly to the enjoyment of his waking dreams, when a low, continued rasping sound from below—at first unobserved—finally won his attention. As he bestirred himself to wonder what it meant, it merged into an audible clicking and then ceased.

A sudden comprehension came to him, an intuition forcible as it was instantaneous. Some one was forcing an entrance into the house. He leaped lightly from his bed, and hastily assuming his garments, stole noiselessly out into the hall and down the broad stairway.

A door of one of the rooms was ajar, and through the crevice there fell a thread of yellow light. Thorpe approached it, but in the utter darkness of the hallway, rendered denser yet by that narrow stream of brightness, struck his foot against some obstacle, and falling forward, clutched at the door flinging it open wide.

A man was at work upon the fastenings of a closed cabinet, the probable receptacle of valuable trinkets. A glance sufficed to convince Thorpe that it was the same who had received deserved chastisement at his hands during the early evening.

In a second Rayston had recovered his feet, but already the man was down upon him, and there began a desperate struggle between the two. It was of short duration. The burglar, gaining a momentary advantage, drew a pistol and leveled it at the other's breast. Thorpe, realizing his danger, with a mighty effort flung his whole weight

against his assailant, and the latter fell back striking his head against the sharp corner of the cabinet. At the same instant the pistol was discharged, the contents entering Thorpe's shoulder.

The household, aroused by the shot, found the two side by side upon the floor, both senseless, but neither mortally injured.

They were taken up, the one delivered to the administrators of justice, the other tended with kindly hands by the inmates of Cliffe House.

Petronella shivered before a glowing anthracite fire. The girl's bright bloom had faded out, and her wayward moods were at once the trial and anxiety of her watchful relatives. They thought she pined for the balmy air of her own Spanish clime, and tried to win her to a liking for her new home.

No one read the secret of her untutored and impulsive nature. Least of all, Thorpe Rayston, who had—himself unconscious of it—become as a god whom she worshipped. All unavailingly she knew, for from almost the first she had read the secret which was now no longer a secret, of Thorpe's and Ermengarde's loves.

She was in a little room opening from one of the drawing-room suite. The door was ajar between, and the sound of voices reached her. She crept stealthily nearer, holding her breath to listen.

"They were dreary years," she heard Thorpe say. "And, oh, Ermengarde, it is like death to know that there are more such to stretch between me and my love."

"Your father, proud and inexorable as of old, will not abate one jot from his declared purpose. The husband you must wed must possess wealth, which I can never hope to own until Julian Thorpe's half-million shall have become mine, and death seems as likely to strike me down as to lay its finger on that wretched, tough old man."

Petronella stole away with a brilliancy upon her face which had not been there for weeks. In the hall her grandfather met her, and patting her cheek said, cheerfully: "Ah, Pet; your roses are coming back at last. We'll have you bright as ever ere long."

She passed him with a smile and sped away to her own room. No one saw her after that, but in the evening, when Ermengarde grew alarmed and went in search of her, the girl was gone utterly, and in a conspicuous place was a package addressed to Thorpe Rayston.

It contained the title deeds of vast estates which had been left Petronella by her Spanish mother. A tiny note for Thorpe ran thus:

"I want you to take them all and marry Ermengarde whom you love. Think of me kindly as one who wishes you every happiness; and do not seek me. It will be useless; you will never find me."

And they never did. Petronella had withdrawn herself from them completely as if she had never been.

For the rest, Thorpe and Ermengarde found such perfect contentment in each other, that remembrances of the wayward girl who had sacrificed so much for them, faded into the semblance of a romance which their own happiness alone convinced them had been reality.

Tracked to Death:  
OR,  
THE LAST SHOT.

BY CAPT. MAXINE REID,  
AUTHOR OF "HELPLESS HAND," "LONE RANCHER,"  
"SCALP HUNTERS," "WHITE CHIEF," ETC.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

THE "CHOCTAW CHIEF."

"You'll excuse me, stranger, for interruptin' you in the readin' of your newspaper. I like to see men in the way of acquirin' knowledge. But we're all of us here goin' to take a drink. Won't you join?"

The invitation, rudely if not uncourtously extended, came from a man of middle age, who stood at least six feet three, without counting the thick soles of a pair of horse-skin boots—the tops of which rose several inches above his knees. He was a person rawboned and generally of rough exterior, wearing a blanket coat, his trousers tucked into the aforesaid boots, with a leather belt round his waist, under the coat, but over the haft of a bowie-knife, alongside which peeped out the brass butt of a Colt's revolving pistol—army pattern. In correspondence with this paraphernalia of clothing and equipment, he showed a cut-throat countenance, typical of the State Penitentiary; cheeks bloated as from excessive indulgence in drink; eyes watery and somewhat bloodshot; lips thick and sensual; with a nose set obliquely, looking as if it had received hard treatment in some pugilistic encounter. His hair was of a yellowish clay color, of lighter tint over the eyebrows. There was none either on his lips or jaws, nor yet upon his thick, hog-like throat, that seemed as if some day it might stand in need of something stiffer than a beard to protect it from the noose of the hangman.

He to whom the invitation had been extended was of quite a different appearance; not a whit less repulsive, only that the repellent points were mental or moral, rather than physical. In age he was not much over half that of the individual who had addressed him—twenty-five, perhaps—of dark complexion, thin, cadaverous, the cheeks haggard, as if from sleepless anxiety; the upper lip showing bluish blotches, as from a pair of mustaches recently shaved off; the eyes coal-black, with a sinister glance, sent with suspicious furtiveness from under a broad hat-brim pulled low down over the brow. His figure might have been well enough, but for garments somewhat coarse and ill-fitting; too ample both for body and limbs, as if intended to conceal rather than to show these to advantage. A practiced detective, after scanning the gentleman, taking note of his habiliments, especially the hat and his manner of wearing it, would have pronounced him a person seeking disguise—a disguise, too, somewhat clumsily adopted. A thought, or suspicion, of this kind appeared to be in the mind of the rough Hercules who had invited him to drink, though he was no detective.

"Thank you," said the young fellow, lowering the newspaper to his knee, and raising the rim of his hat as little as possible, "I've just taken a drink. I hope you'll excuse me."

"No; durned if we do! Not this time, stranger! The rule o' this tavern is, that all

takes a 'smile' together—leastwise on first meetin'. So, say what's to be the name o' yer licker."

"Oh! in that case I'm agreeable," rejoined the newspaper-reader, laying aside his reluctance, and along with it the paper, at the same time rising to his feet. Then, stepping up to the bar, he added, in a tone of seeming frankness:

"Phil Quantrell ain't the man to back out where there's glasses going. But, gentlemen, as I'm the stranger in this crowd, I hope you'll let me stand the drinks."

The men thus addressed as "gentlemen" were seven or eight in number; not one of whom, from external appearance, could lay claim to the epithet. So far as this went, they were all fit conferees for the brutal-looking bully in the blanket coat who had opened the conversation. Had Phil Quantrell addressed them as "blackguards," he would have been nearer the mark. Villainous scoundrels they appeared, one and all; though in different degrees as to scoundrelism of countenance, and with a like variety of villain semblance in their costumes.

"No—no!" shouted several, determined to prove they were at least gentlemen in generosity. "No stranger can stand treat here. You drink with us, Mr. Quantrell."

"This score's mine," said the first spokesman, in an authoritative voice. "After that anybody as likes may stand treat. Come, Johnny! trot out the stuff. Brandy smash for me."

The bartender thus appealed to—as repulsive-looking as any of the party upon whom he was called to wait—with that dexterity peculiar to his craft, soon had the counter furnished with bottles and decanters containing several kinds of liquors; a row of tumblers being set alongside corresponding to the number of those intending to drink.

And soon they were all drinking; each having chosen the tipple most preferred by his palate.

It was a scene of every-day occurrence, every hour, almost every minute, in a tavern bar-room of the Southern United States; the only peculiarity in this case being that the tavern in which it took place was very different from the ordinary village inn or roadside hotel. It stood upon the outskirts of Natchitoches, in a suburb known as the "Indian quarter;" sometimes also called "Spanish town"—both names having reference to the fact that the queer cabin cottages around were inhabited by pure-blooded Indians and half-breeds, with poor whites of Spanish extraction—these last being degenerate descendants of those who had originally colonized the place.

The tavern itself, bearing an old weather-washed swing-sign, on which had once been depicted an Indian in full war-paint, plumes, and costume, was known as the "Choctaw Chief." It was kept by a man supposed to be a Spaniard, but might have been any thing else; who had for his bar-keeper the afore-mentioned "Johnny," a personage supposed to be an Irishman, but of like dubious nationality as the landlord.

The Choctaw Chief took in travelers; giving them bed, board, and lodging. It usually had a goodly number under its roof, though they were travelers of a peculiar kind, strange both in aspect and manners; no one knowing when or whence they came, or at what time, or whether bent, when they took their departure.

As the house stood out of the ordinary path of town promenaders, in an outskirt scarce ever visited by respectable people, no one cared to inquire into the character of its guests, or aught else relating to it. To those who chanced to stray in its direction, it was known as a sort of cheap hostelry, that gave shelter to all sorts of queer characters—hunters, trappers, small Indian traders, returned from an expedition on the prairies; and along with these, such travelers as were without means to stop at the more pretentious inns of the village; or, having the means, preferred, for reasons of their own, to put up at the Choctaw Chief.

Such was the tavern before whose bar stood Phil Quantrell, as he had called himself, drinking with the seven or eight men to whose boon companionship he had been so brusquely introduced—as their chief spokesman said, according to the custom of the place.

## CHAPTER XXX.

THE TELL-TALE KERCHIEF.

The first drink swallowed, Quantrell called for another round; and then a third was ordered, by some one else paying, or promising to pay, for it.

A fourth smile was insisted upon by another some one who said he would pay for it; all the liquor split, up to this time, being either cheap brandy or "rot-gut" whiskey.

Quantrell, now fairly in his cups, and acting under the generous impulse they had produced, sung out, "Champagne!"—a wine which the poorest tavern in the Southern States, even the Choctaw Chief, could plentifully supply.

After that the choice vintage of France, or its gooseberry counterfeit, flowed freely; Johnny showing no reluctance in stripping the silver necks, twisting the wire, and letting fly the corks. For the stranger guest had taken a purse from his pocket, which all could see was chock full of gold "eagles," some observing—but saying nothing about—the singular contrast of this wealth with the cheap, coarse attire upon his person.

After all not much. Within the wooden walls of the Choctaw Chief there had been seen many a contrast equally curious. Neither its hybrid landlord, nor his bar-keeper, nor its guests were likely to take note—or, at all events, make remarks upon—many circumstances which elsewhere might have seemed singular.

Still was there one among the roystering crowd who took note of this, as also of other acts done, and sayings spoken, by Phil Quantrell in his cups. This was the Colossus who had introduced him to the jovial company, and who still stuck to him as his chaperone.

Some of this man's associates, who appeared on familiar footing, called him "Jim Borlisse;" others, less free, addressed him as "Mister Borlisse;" while still others, at intervals and rather as if by a slip of the tongue, gave him the title "Captain."

Jim, Mister, or Captain Borlisse—which ever designation he deserved—throughout the whole debauch, kept his bloodshot eyes fixed upon their new acquaintance, and watched his every movement. His ears, too, were open to catch every word Quantrell uttered, weighing well its import.

For all this, he said or did nothing to show he was thus attentive to the stranger

—at first his guest, but now a spendthrift host to him and all the party.

While the champagne was being freely quaffed, of course there was much conversation, and on many subjects. But one became special, seeming more than all others to engross the attention of the roysterers under the roof of the Choctaw Chief.

It was a murder that had been committed in the State of Mississippi, near the town of Natchez; a full account of which had just appeared in the local journal of Natchitoches. The paper was lying on the tavern table; and all of them who could read had already made themselves acquainted with the particulars of the crime. Those whose scholarship did not extend so far had learnt them at second-hand from their better educated associates.

The murdered man was called Clancy—Charles Clancy—and the murderer, or he under suspicion of being so, was named Richard Darke, the son of Ephraim Darke, a rich Mississippi planter.

The paper gave further details: that the body of the murdered man had not been found before the time of its going to press—though the evidence collected left no doubt of the foul deed having been done; and that Darke, the man accused of it, after being arrested and lodged in the county jail, had managed to make his escape—through connivance with his jailer, who had also disappeared from the place. The paragraph likewise mentioned the motive, supposed or conjectured; giving the name of a young lady, Miss Helen Armstrong, and speaking of a letter and picture dropped by the assassin. It wound up by saying, that no doubt both prisoner and jailer had G. T. T.—"Gone to Texas"—a phrase at that time of frequent use in the States—applied to fugitives from justice.

While the murder was being canvassed and discussed by the drinkers in the bar-room of the Choctaw Chief—a subject that seemed to have a strange fascination for them—Borlisse, who had become elevated with the alcohol, though usually a man of taciturn habit, broke out with an asseveration that caused surprise to all, especially his more intimate associates.

"Curse the luck!" he vociferated, striking his heavy fist upon the counter till the decanters danced under the concussion; "I'd a' given a hundred dollars to 'a' been in the place o' that fellow Darke, whoever he is!"

"Why?" interrogated several of the bon-vivants. "Why, Jim?" "Why, Mr. Borlisse?" "Why, Captain?"

"Why?" echoed the man of many titles, again striking the counter and causing decanters and glasses to jingle. "Why? Because that Clancy—that same Clancy—is the skunk that, before a packed jury, half o' them yellar-bellied Mexikins, in the town of Nacogdoches, swore I stole a horse from him. Not only swore it, but war believed; an' got me—me, Jim Borlisse—tied for twenty-four hours to a post, and whipped into the bargain. Yes, boys, whipped! an' by a low Mexikin nigger, under the orders o' one o' their constables, they call al-gazeels. I've got the mark o' their lashes on me now, and can show them, if any o' ye hev a doubt about it. I ain't 'shamed to tell you fellows; as ye all know what it means, I guess. But I'm burnin' mad to think that Charley Clancy's escaped clear o' the vengeance I'd sworn again him. I know'd he was comin' back to Texas, him and his. That's what took him out thar when I met him in Nacogdoches. I war waitin' and watchin' till he shed some this way. Now, it appears, somebody has spoilt my plans—somebody of the name o' Richard Darke. An', while I envy this Dick Darke, I say d—n him for doin' it!"

"D—n Dick Darke! D—n him for doin' it!" rung out the chorus of roysterers, till the walls of the Choctaw Chief re-echoed the blasphemous acclaim.

The drinking debauch was continued till a late hour, Quantrell paying shot for the whole party. Maudlin as most of them had become, they still wondered that a man so shabbily dressed could command so much cash and coin. Some of them were so little perplexed by it.

Borlisse was, perhaps, less so than any of his companions. He had noted certain circumstances that gave him the explanation; one, especially, that seemed to make every thing clear. As the stranger, calling himself Phil Quantrell, stood by his side, champagne glass in hand, he took out a pocket-handkerchief to wipe the wine from his lips. The handkerchief fell upon the floor, Borlisse picking it up, but without restoring it to its owner.

He did so after a time; but not till he had made himself acquainted with a name embroidered on one of its corners.

When, at a later hour, the two sat together, drinking a last good-night draught, Borlisse placed his lips close to the stranger's ear, and said, in a quiet whisper:

"Your name is not Philip Quantrell: it is Richard Darke!"

## CHAPTER XXXI.

THE MURDERER UNMASKED.

"Your name is not Philip Quantrell, it is Richard Darke!"

Had a rattlesnake sounded its harsh "skirr" under the chair on which Quantrell was sitting he could not have shown more alarm, or started up more abruptly, than he did when Borlisse whispered these words into his ear. For Richard Darke in reality it was.

He first half rose from his seat, then sat down again; all the while trembling in such fashion that the wine went over the edge of his glass, wetting the sanded floor of the bar-room.

Fortunately for him, the other bon-vivants had retired to their beds, it being now a very late hour of the night—near midnight. The drinking "saloon" of the Choctaw Chief was quite emptied of its inebriated guests—the two principal entertainers alone staying. Even Johnny, the bar-keeper, had gone kitchenward—in all likelihood to look after some supper.

Otherwise the startled demeanor of the gentleman hitherto figuring as Phil Quantrell would have attracted eyes upon, and perhaps brought around him an inquisitive crowd.

As it was, there was only Borlisse to bear witness to the effect of his own speech; which, though but whispered, had proved so significantly startling.

The speaker, on his side, showed no surprise. Throughout all the evening he had been taking the measure of his man, and had arrived at a full comprehension of the case. He saw that he was in the company of Charles Clancy's murderer. The disguise that Darke had adopted—the mere



shaving off his mustaches and putting on a dress of home-woven "cottonade"—the common wear of the Louisiana Creoles—even with a broad-brim palmetto hat to correspond, was too thin, too flimsy to deceive a man like Borlasse, himself accustomed to travesties and metamorphoses far more ingenious. To have appeared in keeping with his coarse garb, Darke should have shown less free of his gold canes. Though it might not have much mattered. The man into whose company he had chanced—like himself a traveler staying at the Choctaw Chief—would have seen through the thickest mask he could have assumed. It was not the first time for Jim Borlasse to meet a murderer fleeing from the scene of his crime—stealthily, disguisedly making way across the boundary line of justice that lay between the United States and Texas—then the Sabine river.

"Come, Mr. Darke," he said, extending his arm in a gesture of reassurance, "don't waste the wine in that ridiculous fashion. You and I are alone, and I reckon we understand one another. If not, we'll soon come to do so—the sooner by your putting on no nonsensical airs, but tell me the clear and candid truth. First, then, answer me the question: Air you, or air ye not, Richard Darke? If ye air, don't be afeard to say it. No humbuggery, now! That won't do for Jim Borlasse."

The disguised assassin, still trembling, hesitated to make a reply. Only for a moment. He saw it would be of no use denying his identity. The man who had questioned him, of colossal size and rufian aspect, notwithstanding the copious draughts he had swallowed during the night, looked cool as a tombstone and stern as an inquisitor. The bloodshot eyes, watery though they were, gleamed upon him with glances that said: "Tell me a lie, and I'll be your enemy, even to stabbing you, some time, in the dark, or shooting you down, now, upon the spot."

At the same time those horrid eyes spoke of safety, if the truth were told—of friendship, such friendship as may be felt between two criminals equally steeped in crime.

The assassin of Charles Clancy—now for many days and nights wandering the earth, a fugitive from foiled justice, seeking untrodden paths, hiding in holes and corners, at last taking shelter under the roof of the Choctaw Chief because of its repute for sheltering such as he—seemed at length to have reached a haven of safety.

So thought he himself, after listening to the appeal of his boon companion, and looking into the eyes of the man as he made it.

The volunteered confessions of Borlasse—the tale of his hostility to Charles Clancy and its cause—was enough to give Darke confidence about any communication he might make in return. Beyond all doubt his new acquaintance stood in mud, deep as himself. Without further hesitation, he said:

"I am Richard Darke."

"All right," was the reply. "And now let me tell you, I like your manly way of answerin' the question I put ye. Same time, I may as well remark, 'twouldn't been all one if ye'd sayed *no*. This child hasn't been hidin' half o' his life, 'count o' some little mistakes made at the beginnin' of it, not to know when a man's got into a sin'lar fix. First day you showed your face inside the Choctaw Chief I seed that war somethin' amiss, tho', in course, I couldn't gile the thing a name, much less know 'twas that ugly word which begins with an M. This evenin', I acknowledge, I war a bit put out, seein' you round that by the hotel, spyin' after one of them Armstrong girls—which of them I needn't say."

Darke started, saying, mechanically, "You saw me there?"

"In course, how could I help it—bein' there myself, on the same errand, I suppose."

"Well?" interrogated Darke, waiting for the other to proceed.

"Well, that as I've said, some little bamboozled me. From your looks and ways since you first came hyar, I guessed that the something wrong must be different from a love-scape. Besides, a man stayin' at the Choctaw Chief, and sportin' the cheap rig as you've got on, war'n't likely to be aspirin' to such dainty damselfs them. You'll give in, yourself, it looked queer, won't ye?"

"I don't know that it did," was the reply, pronounced doggedly, and in a half-regardless tone.

"You don't! Well, I thought so, up to the time o' gettin' back to the tavern hyar—not many minutes afore my meetin' and askin' you to jine us in drinks. If you've any curiosity to know what changed my mind, clarin' up the whole thing, I'll tell ye."

"What?" asked Darke, scarcely reflecting on what he said.

"That 'ere newspaper you war readin' when I give you the invite. I read it afore you did, and had ciphered out the whole thing. Puttin' six and six together, I could easy make the dozen. The same bein' that one of the young ladies stayin' at the hotel is the Miss Helen Armstrong spoke of in the paper; and the man I caught watchin' her is Richard Darke, who killed Charles Clancy—*yourself*!"

"I am—I won't, I don't deny it to you, Mr. Borlasse. I am Richard Darke. I did kill Charles Clancy, though I deny havin' murdered him."

"Never mind that. Between friends, as I suppose we can now call ourselves, there need be no nice distinguishin' of terms. Murder or manslaughter, it's all the same, when a man has a motive such as yours. An' when he's druv' out of the pale of what they call society, an' hunted from the settlements, he's not like to lose the respect of them who's been saved the same way. Your bein' Richard Darke an' havin' killed Charles Clancy, in no ways makes you an enemy o' Jim Borlasse, except in your havin' robbed him of a revenge he'd himself sworn to take. Let that go now. He's dead; and d—d, I s'pose, by this time. I ain't angry, but only envious o' you for havin' the satisfaction of sendin' the skunk to kingdom come, where I intended sendin' him."

"An' now, Darke, what do you intend doin'?"

The question came upon the assassin with a sobering effect. His copious potatoes had hitherto kept him from reflecting. It was only on the boon companion clearly showing a knowledge of his identity, he had felt a renewal of his fears, though they were soon after tranquilized by the "thieves' confidence" with which Borlasse had inspired him.

The interrogatory relating to his future

again brought its darkness, with all its dangers, before him, and he paused before giving response.

Without waiting for it, his questioner continued:

"If you've got no fixed plan of action, and will listen to the advice of a friend, I'd advise you to become one o' us."

"One of you! What does that mean, Mr. Borlasse?"

"Well, I can't tell you here," rejoined Borlasse, in a subdued tone. "Deserted as this bar-room appears to be, it's got ears for all that. I see that curse, Johnny, creepin' about, pretendin' to be lookin' after his supper. If he knew as much about you as I do, you'd be in limbo afore you ket into your bed. I needn't tell you that a reward offered, for you see'd that yourself in the newspaper. Johnny, an' a good many more, would be glad to go halves with me, for tellin' them only half of what I now know. I ain't goin' to betray you. I've reasons for not doin' so. After what I've said, I reckon you can trust me."

"I can," answered the assassin, heaving a sigh of relief.

"All right, then," said Borlasse; "we understand one another. But it won't do to stay talkin' here any longer. Let's go up to my bedroom. We'll be safe there, and I've got a bottle of brandy, the best stuff for a nightcap. Over that we can talk things straight, without any one having the chance to set them crooked. Come along."

Darke, without protest, responded to the invitation. He dared not have done otherwise. It sounded more like a command. The man extending it, had now full control over him—could at any moment deliver him up to justice—have him dragged to jail.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### THE RETREATING SPECTERS.

At that hour, when Borlasse, within the Choctaw Chief, was drawing confession from Phil Quantrell, *alias* Richard Darke, two other men, inside a more reputable hostelry not far off, were conversing of the same crime and the same criminals. Their talk was chiefly about the latter, and told of an intent to do what Darke's boon companion had no idea of doing—that is, have him re-arrested and lodged in prison.

These men were Colonel Armstrong and the young planter, Dupre, who were seated inside a chamber of the hotel, both by this time aware of the fact that Charles Clancy's murderer was at large, and within less than a mile of where they sat.

How they had obtained the information is already known, or may be conjectured. Of course, it came from Colonel Armstrong's daughter, Helen.

As we have said, the young lady, having seen some one upon the street whose presence strangely affected her, had retreated back within the veranda, where she found herself alone. A voice sounding through the corridors inside had carried her sister away. It was the voice of Louis Dupre inquiring for his betrothed, which the latter, recognizing, had responded to with hilarious promptness.

On scanning the shadowed piazza, Helen saw that there was no human figure in it, save her own. She had seen this on first stepping back, and again after she had gazed a second time into the street.

There was light enough to make discernible the outlines of a chair—the cane-seated rocking-chair of the States. Into this she sunk, without thought of its power of oscillation or availing herself of it. On the contrary, she remained rigid, erect upon the seat, keeping the chair poised upon a pivot, in balance.

Her thoughts were similarly concentrated; her hands clasped over her forehead, as if to keep them from scattering.

On retreating back from the balcony, she had done so with some feeling of alarm and a slight trembling in her frame. What she had seen was well calculated to cause both.

Both were over in an instant, her courage and coolness having returned; along with them an impulse of anger.

Down in the street, at less than twenty paces distant, was the assassin of her lover—the man who had made her life desolate. There was he, after escaping from the prison in which his captors had confined, and afterward so negligently guarded him.

She could have him re-arrested—could, should and would. This was the reflection that followed, after the first moment of confusion.

But how? At once shout "Murderer!" and call upon the street passengers to seize him?

No. It would be the very way to give him a chance of getting off. Ere the cry could be responded to, he would be away into the woods, with sufficient start not to be easily overtaken. Around Natchitoches the thickest kind of timber, and thicket, surrounded by an ax, came close to the houses. Within a hundred yards of the outskirts a man might plunge into the primeval forest—a fugitive find concealment in thicket or swamp.

Helen Armstrong was over twenty years of age; had been brought up in the backwoods, accustomed to western ways. Of enterprising spirit, like the pioneer stock from whom she was descended, reflective and inquiring, she also understood something of western wiles. She had the sense, and *any fool*, to take the necessary steps for counteracting them. She saw that the raising a confused outcry would only be giving the criminal a chance to escape from the justice he had once before baffled.

As he had not seen her, or, at all events, recognized her—she felt sure of this—there could be no need for any hurried action to prevent his leaving the place. Doubtless, he would be there for days. One, or less, half a day, an hour, would be enough to carry out the purpose that now shaped itself in her thoughts. This was to communicate what she had seen to her father, as also to Louis Dupre, and leave them to take steps, in conjunction with the police authorities of Natchitoches, for the arrest of the jail-breaker.

Than this she could not then have done more. For on returning to look upon the street, her natural courage having overcome the fear that had for a moment overpowered her, she saw that the ruffian had disappeared.

Screened by the vine-laden trellis, she stood for some time gazing along the street, scanning it in both directions as far as the lamps illumined it. Far off, on the dim ledge, where light became blended with darkness, she thought, or fancied she could still trace the outlines of that horrid specter—the assassin of her lover.

Whether he or not, the form so observed

was in the act of moving away. He was already too far off to be hounded with a "hue and cry," that would have any chance of overtaking, much less making capture of him.

But this Helen Armstrong had no longer thought of raising. She resolved on the other course of action. To carry out which she only waited for the return of her father—at the time absent from the hotel—and the disengagement of Louis Dupre from his amorous dalliance with Jessie.

"Where is the woman?" (*"Ou est la femme?"*) was the first question asked by Talleyrand, when any knotty point of national policy was brought before him. The famed diplomatist knew, and acknowledged he had no adversaries in his own line more difficult to deal with than women. Nor yet more frequently; since, according to his interrogatory, there was sure to be one at the bottom of every trouble—the *causa leterrima belli*.

Talleyrand's first belief is not always made good. In the case of Helen Armstrong, feminine diplomacy was destined to defeat. On seeing Richard Darke in the street, better had she raised the "hue and cry." It might, perchance, have led to his re-arrest. As it was, the result was likely to be different, since other eyes, besides hers, were, in the by-play, watching the movements of both. They were those described by her sister as resembling the eyes of alligators.

The owner of them, after what they had seen, came to certain conclusions; such that he stole away from the spot determined to put the assassin upon his guard.

It was late at night when Colonel Armstrong returned to his hotel, and Louis Dupre became disengaged from his tete-a-tete with Jessie, too late to take any steps for the recapture of the assassin. Had they known where to lay hands upon him, or what roof was that night giving him shelter, they might have determined differently. Then it would have been worth while to communicate with the authorities, and act at once. As it was, neither knew aught of the Choctaw Chief or the guest it was entertaining; so this after long talking upon the matter, they at length concluded to let it stand over till morning.

Unwise determination—fatal for their purpose. Before the morning sun rose over the roofs of Natchitoches, before the first dim streak of daybreak fell upon its shadowed streets, Richard Darke, along with half a dozen other guests of the Choctaw Chief, had taken departure from the place.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### "WILL YOU BE ONE OF US?"

THE abrupt departure of Richard Darke from Natchitoches, as the early hour at which it was made, requires but little explanation. A conversation occurring between him and Borlasse, in the bedroom of the latter, which was but a continuation of their talk held in the bar-room, will make the act and motive clear.

As soon as the stalwart ruffian had entered his sleeping-apartment, pointed out a chair to his invited guest, and planted himself upon another, with the promised bottle of brandy between them, he resumed speech.

"I've asked you, Mr. Darke, to be one o' us. I've done it for your own good, as you ought to know without my tellin' ye. Well, you asked me in return what that means; didn't ye?"

"Yes; I did," said Darke, answering without any definite idea or purpose.

"It means, then," continued Borlasse, taking a gulp out of his glass, "that me an' the others you've been drinkin' with, air as good a sort of fellers as ever lived. That war a cheerful party you've seen for yourself. What's passed this night ain't no wheres to the merry times we spend upon the prairies out in Texas—for it's in Texas we live."

"May I ask, Mr. Borlasse, what business you follow?"

"Well, when we're engaged in business, that's mostly horse-catchin'. We rope wild horses, or mustangs, as they're called, an' sometimes them that ain't jest so wild. We bring them into the settlements for sale. For that reason we go under the name of 'mustangers.' Between whites, when business isn't too brisk, we spend our time in some of the Texas towns—them what's well in to 'rist the Grand, whar there's a good sprinklin' of Mexikins in the population. We've some rare times among the Mexikin girls, I can assure you. You may take Jim Borlasse's word for that, you may."

"I have no reason to doubt it," answered Darke.

"Well, I needn't say more, need I? I know you're fond of a pretty face, with black eyes in it. You'll get both among the senoritas, to your heart's content. Enough, maybe, to make you forget the pain I saw glancin' on you out of the hotel gallery."

"Glancin' on me?" exclaimed Darke, showing surprise, not unmixed with alarm.

"Glancin' on you; right on ye."

"You mean—"

"I mean Miss Helen Armstrong's eyes; the same that made you do that little bit of shootin' business, with Charles Clancy for a target."

"Do you think she *saw* me?" asked the assassin, with evidently increasing uneasiness, and without waiting for the conclusion of the other's speech.

"Think! I'm sure of it. More than saw—she recognized ye. I could tell that from the way she shot back into the shadow. Did ye not notice it yourself?"

"No," answered Darke, the monosyllable issuing mechanically from his trembling lips, while a shiver passed through his frame.

His questioner, observing these signs, said:

"Take my advice, and come with us fellows to Texas. Before you're long there the Mexikin girls will make you stop mopin' about Miss Armstrong. After the first *fandangos* you've been at, you won't care a straw for her. Believe Jim Borlasse, when he tells you you'll soon forget her."

"Never!" exclaimed Darke, in the fervor of his passion—thwarted though it had been—forgetting the peril of his position.

"If that's your determination," returned Borlasse, "an' you've made up your mind to keep Miss Armstrong in sight, you won't be likely to live long. As sure as you're sittin' thar, by breakfast-time to-morrow mornin' the town o' Naketosh 'll be too hot to hold ye."

Darke started up from his chair, as if it was too hot to remain seated on.

"Keep cool, Phil Quantrell!" apostrophized the Texan. "No need for ye to be alarmed now. There would be if you were

in that chair, or this room, eight hours later. I won't be myself not six; for I may as well tell ye that Jim Borlasse, like yourself, has reasons for shiften his quarters from the Choctaw Chief. He'll be gone a good hour afore sun-up. An' he gives you a friend's advice to make tracks along wi' him. Will you go?"

Darke even yet hesitated to give an affirmative answer. His love for Helen Armstrong—wild, wicked passion though it might be—was the controlling power of his heart. The thought of leaving her behind—separating from the place in which she stayed, perhaps never to see her again—this thought was more repugnant, more dominating, than the peril which plainly stared him in the face—the specter of a scaffold!

The Texan ruffian guessed the cause of his irresolution. More than this, he understood and knew he had the means to put an end to it. A word would be sufficient; or, at the most, a single speech. He spoke it thus:

"If you're determined to stick by the apron-strings o' Miss Helen Armstrong, you'll not do that by stayin' here in Naketosh. Your best place, to be near her, will be along with me."

"How so, Mr. Borlasse?"

"You ought to know, without my tellin' you—a man of your cuteness, Quantrell! You say you can never forget the oldest of that pair o' girls. I believe you, and will be candid, too, in sayin', no more is Jim Borlasse like to forget the younger 'un. I thought nothin' could 'a' fetched that soft feelin' over me. 'Twan't likely, after what I've gone through in my time. But she's done it—them blue eyes of hers, durned if they ain't! Then, do you suppose I was goin' to run away from, and lose sight o' her and them? No; not till I've had tears out o' them same peepers droppin' on my cheeks. That is, if she take it in the weepin' way."

"I don't understand," stammered Darke.

"You will in time," rejoined the ruffian; "that is, if you come with me, and go where I am goin'." Enough now for you to be told that, there you will find Helen Armstrong."

Without waiting to watch the effect of his last words, the tempter continued:

"Now, Richard Darke, or Philip Quantrell, as you prefer to be called; are you willin' to be one of us?"

"I am!"

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 97.)

## Laura's Peril:

### OR, THE WIFE'S VICTORY.

A STORY OF LOVE, FOLLY, AND REPENTANCE.

BY BARTLEY T. CAMPBELL,

AUTHOR OF "IN THE WEB," "OUT IN THE WORLD," ETC., ETC.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### FOILED.

WHEN the door had been closed behind the reunited pair, the physician sat down, drew a long breath, and exclaimed:

"Well! well! well! This beats the most exciting of Answorth's fictions, and is fully equal to a French play. First, an old friend; then a mystery; and then, 'Oh, heaven and earth, but this is wondrous strange,' a long-lost wife, reconciliation, and, if we had a little red fire—what an effective tableau!"

While he was thus soliloquizing, the front door was unceremoniously opened, and in stalked three men. The first was an old friend, Sam Blaize. His face was very red. He had evidently been drinking heavily, and there was considerable swagger about his gait.

"I say," he blurted out, approaching Doctor Foster, who had arisen to his feet, "where is she?"

"Where is she?" repeated the Doctor.

"Yes, she—the woman?"

The physician began to describe the true character of his visitors; they were the persons whom Laura was flying from.

"If you mean Mrs. Robsart," he began, but Blaize interrupted him.

"Yes, we mean Mrs. Robsart, and you know it, too. We don't want no shilly-shallying about it, either; we come after the woman a long way, and now we want her."

"You do?"

"Yes—we do!"

"And what for, pray?"

One of the two men who had entered with Blaize, and had been silent up to this time, came forward now and said, in a respectful manner:

"Pardon, sir; but there's no need of any hard words. We're officers of the law; we've come here to do our duty; our simple duty, sir, and it will be better for all parties to have no trouble."

"I understand that, perfectly," answered the Doctor; "and I'm sure I've no disposition to interfere with you in the discharge of your duty."

The officer nodded complacently, and the other went on to say: "You are in search of Mrs. Laura Robsart, whom *somebody* charges with killing her husband?"

"Is that somebody?" interrupted Blaize, again.

"Ah! you are the witness—eh?"

"Yes; the only witness, too?"

"You saw the murdered man, I suppose?"

"Saw him? I saw *her* do it!"

"Indeed?" Then after some hesitation—"you knew the murdered man?"

"Well."

"You could identify him easily?"

"I never forget a face."

"Good!"

"Eh?"

"You will have an opportunity of testing your memory in a moment."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean simply this—Cleve Robsart was not killed—neither by his wife nor any one else."

"Oh, my friend, that won't do," said the officer, with a grin; "that's too thin; it won't work."

"But, I'm prepared to prove my words good," replied the Doctor. Then, going to the door of the inner room, he rapped gently, and called out, "Cleve! Cleve! Come here, I want you—alone, if you please."

The next instant Sam Blaize was startled by the appearance of one whom he would have taken his oath a moment before had been dead for many a year.

"Are you Cleve Robsart," gasped Blaize, of Sysky county?"

"Yes, as sure as you are a Texan, of Klamath Bar," was the reply.

Blaize was quite sober now; this sudden

appearance had killed the effects of the liquor completely.

"Well," said the officer, "is this your murdered man?" turning to Blaize.

"Yes, I think so. I'm quite sure it is," he said, in answer. "But, I saw him fall and the blood spurt out of his neck. I'm positive of that."

"And there is the mark yet," said Cleve, pulling aside his beard and disclosing a red scar.

"Yes! yes!" said Blaize. "That's him! The woman's got off by a hair's breadth!"

"So, you're the man supposed to have been dead—eh?" and the officer addressed Cleve.

"Yes, sir; I'm the man?"

"You are Cleveland Robsart?"

"I can vouch for that," interposed Doctor Foster.

"Well, there seems to have been a pretty mess made of this business, anyway. But, however, you are not to blame, and to be candid, I'm glad the dead man's alive. Come on," he said, speaking to his companion; "in the morning we'll have the affidavits of identification made out. Good-night! Blaize, aren't you coming with us?"

"Yes, I'm goin'!" was the response. The door opened and closed, and the two policemen and Blaize trotted down the street together.

In the little parlor of the Calvert House, Sarah Rook encountered the trio. "You've come back soon. Where is she?" "Where is your prisoner?" she demanded.

"Ain't got any prisoner," returned one of the officers. "The man's alive and well; we've just had a mighty interesting talk with him."

"Why, yes, of course," put in Blaize. "You see, Cleve Robsart recovered from the wound he got that night, and he is now in this town!"

"In this town?" she repeated.

"In this very town. I saw him but a moment since."

She saw it all then; it broke upon her like a bright light, all at once, and she muttered, "I have been made a fool and dupe of, and I am not avenged after all. I am to be laughed at, jeered at! Oh, this is too much; it's driving me mad."

"But, Mrs. Rook," ventured Blaize, timidly.

"Go away!" she exclaimed. "You are a fool and a knave. You have aided my enemies to drive me mad. Go away, I say—go away!"

She almost shrieked the last words, and Blaize and the two officers withdrew.

"She's got a terrible temper," remarked one of the policemen.

"Terrible," answered Blaize.

That night Sam left Sydneytown forever, and the next morning old Calvert Pitcock found Sarah Rook lying on the floor of his best chamber—dead.

She died from heart disease, the doctors said, and perhaps she did.

## CHAPTER XXX.

### THE END.



the dark, handsome, stylish young merchant, nor the pleasure he experienced to find her even more winsome than of old, and a thousand times more beautiful than Dalby had painted her.

Of course he was astonished at the new role he found Cleve playing, and he could just remember that Laura bore a striking resemblance to the woman whom he met when quite a boy at his own fireside in Rutledge.

At first Laura wanted to return immediately to Robsart Place, but Alice and John Nevin coaxed them to remain another week.

"We are to be married, on Thursday evening, you know," she said to Mabel, "quietly at home, and we want you all to be present. There will be no strangers."

They remained, and when Thursday evening came round, a marriage ceremony was performed in the drawing-room at Oak Manor, and Miss Alice Houston became the wife of John Nevin.

There was singing and dancing, too, on the carpet, and every one present voted it an exceedingly pleasant affair.

The next morning, the newly-wedded pair started for a tour of Europe.

Robsart Place was decked in snow-wreaths, and the Christmas bells were ringing right merrily from the steeples of the two faded churches in Sydneytown, when Joe Dormer wed Mabel Robsart. The ceremony, as in the former case, was performed in the drawing-room. It was a grand affair; the cakes and confections came all the way from Baltimore, the guests from twenty miles around. The bride's dress was said to have been imported from Belgium, and the lace that flounced it, was made in France and cost hundreds of dollars.

As might be expected, Mabel looked charmingly, and when Joe caught a glimpse of her, as she came modestly in, leaning on the arm of her father, he could scarce keep back an exclamation of wonder.

The ceremony over, the happy pair, accompanied by Laura and Cleve, set out for California, and in due season they started Adam almost out of his wits by walking in to the back office where he was busy at work.

After the first shock had subsided, and after Adam had cried over Mabel a while, he said, gayly:

"And you wasn't afraid to come back with Joe?"

"No, not a bit," she replied. "Stoop down; I want to tell you something."

He did so.

"I'm Joe's wife!"

The prompter may as well ring down the curtain.

THE END.

## The Dark Secret: The Mystery of Fontelle Hall.

BY COUSIN MAY CARLETON

### CHAPTER XXX.

"All things hath an end,"—PROVERB.

"We are born; we laugh; we weep—  
We love—we drop—we die."—CORNWALL.

"And there is no hope, doctor?"

"None, my lord; he must die. No human power can save him now!"

"I knew it myself, and could have told you so," said the wounded man. "When a man's skull is fractured, he is not likely to go cruising round the world much longer. I say, doctor, how many hours before I'm in port?"

"You may possibly live four or five hours—not longer," said the physician, as he arose to go.

"Humph! short notice to settle one's accounts; but it must do, I suppose. Lelia!"

"Here, father," she answered, kneeling beside him. "Shall I send for a clergyman?"

"For a clergyman! No. What do you suppose Captain Nick Tempest has to do with a clergyman? Come here, my girl, and tell me: for the wrong your old father has done you, can you forgive him now?"

"From the bottom of my heart—as freely as I hope to be forgiven," she earnestly answered.

"And you, my lord—they say you are a lord now? We have not been very good friends hitherto; but will you shake hands with the rough old sailor before he goes?"

He held out his hand, and Disbrow took it between both his.

"Then we are friends, my lord?"

"We are, with all my heart."

"Thank you. It was all my fault. I was a rough customer, I know; but the world and I never were on very good terms, and I got reckless, knocking about its sharp corners. It has given me some pretty hard raps, my lord, until it has made me what you see me now. But I am not likely to trouble it much longer. Lelia, you have been an actress since; are you not yet?"

"No, Captain Tempest," interrupted Disbrow; "she is Lelia, the actress, no longer. A few days will make her Countess of Earncliffe."

"Ah!" said the captain, while his dull eye lit up. "A countess—my daughter—old Nick Tempest's daughter a countess!"

Something ludicrous in the notion seemed to strike him; and he laughed outright.

"Do not mind that, father—do not think of it. Remember how few are the hours you have to live," said Jacquetta, gravely.

"Long enough for what I have to do. Tell me, Lelia—or, rather, do you tell me, my lord, for you ever engaged to be married to a certain Norma Macdonald?"

"Yes," said Disbrow, surprised at the question.

"Well, why did you not marry her?"

"For many reasons, captain. She refused me, and married another."

"Is she now in England?"

"Yes."

"I should like to see her. Send for her, Lelia."

"Why, father, do you know her?"

"No; but I should like to. Have you ever met her, Lelia?"

"Often, father. She is like a sister to me."

Again the captain laughed. Jacquetta turned to Disbrow, with a look that plainly said she feared his brain was wandering. The captain saw it, and read its meaning.

"No, I am not insane, Lelia. I know what I am saying. Lelia, Norma Macdonald is your half-sister!"

"Father!"

"It is true. Listen: you know when you were a little child, your mother eloped,

through the machinations of that accursed hag, Grizzle Howlet?"

"Yes."

"Lelia, it was with Randall Macdonald—her father! You both had the same mother!"

Jacquetta and Disbrow were dumb with surprise.

"Ask this man—her father—if it is not true; and let him deny it if he dare. Lelia, you and Norma Macdonald are sisters!"

"I felt it—I knew it. I was sure we were not strangers!" said Jacquetta, in a low, breathless voice.

"This is most wonderful!" exclaimed Disbrow. "I know, now, why Mr. Macdonald would never speak of Norma's mother. But to think that she and Jacquetta should be sisters! I wonder what Austrey will say?"

"Where is your little daughter, Lelia—where is Orrie?" asked the captain, after a pause.

"Here, in London; but not in the house at present. Would you like to see her?"

"Yes; I always liked the little one, somehow. How came she here?"

"Mr. De Vere brought her."

"Mr. De Vere, of Fontelle? Is he here, too?"

"Yes, he and his daughter."

"Ha! his daughter! By the way, that reminds me I have something to say about that daughter. Thereby hangs a tale. She has appeared in trouble lately—has she not?"

"Trouble!" exclaimed Jacquetta, "she has been like a galvanized corpse for the last two years—dead in life!"

"Ah! just so! Well, I know the cause."

"You!" exclaimed Disbrow.

"Yes, me; and I can minister to a mind diseased, too. Do you know the cause, my lord?"

"Yes."

"Then she thinks she has married her brother, does she not?"

Jacquetta uttered an exclamation of horror.

"Yes."

"Well, she may set her mind at rest, then; she has done nothing of the kind."

"What!"

"It is true. I have it from Till—old Till, you know, Grizzle's brother—and he ought to know, if any one does."

"Thank Heaven! Poor, unhappy Augusta! But are you sure, Captain Tempest?"

"Certain! Old Till will confirm the story any day, if you only threaten him with a little hanging!"

"Where is he to be found?"

"At the 'Sailor's Rest,' St. Giles. You'll have no trouble in finding him. You see, old Grizzle knew about the marriage, and trumped up the whole story to frighten the young lady, and save herself."

"Well, but Augusta's husband himself acknowledged its truth."

"And he thinks it is true. You see, my lord, there were a number of other little urchins taken prisoner with the little De Vere at the same time—some of whom died, some were sent to another tribe, and some were kept. Young De Vere died a short time after being taken captive; but he was always a sickly little coddler, Till says."

"Then she really married one of those captives?"

"Yes; but no relation of hers. His real name is Durand—Mark Durand; and he escaped just as Grizzle related. The young lady is all right, so far as marrying her brother is concerned. Find out Till, and he will tell you so, if you only frighten him properly."

"Heaven be praised for this! It will be new life to Augusta. Captain Tempest, what a debt of gratitude she will owe to you!"

"To me? Nonsense! Give me a drink, Lelia—I am parched."

"She held a drink to his lips, and he drank eagerly. He had spoken so rapidly, that he had exhausted himself, and already he was beginning to sink."

"And Augusta was married?" said Jacquetta, in a low voice to Disbrow.

"Yes; that was her secret. He was poor, and they were married in private. Grizzle told her that morning, you remember, he was her brother, and she believed her."

"Poor Augusta! Where is her husband now, I wonder?"

"I do not know. Can you tell us, Captain Tempest, where this Mark Durand is now?"

"I saw him in Paris three weeks ago; most probably you will find him there yet."

"How strangely all these things have come to light! How mysterious are the ways of Providence! Oh, father! if you had only told this long ago, how much misery it might have saved!"

"I did not know it long ago myself; though, if I had," said Captain Nick, in parenthesis, "it would have been all the same, most likely. I knew Grizzle had some power over Miss De Vere; but what it was, I didn't know until old Till, who came this voyage with me, bubbled in his cups, and let the murder out. He'll confirm it, you'll see; for he's as arrant a coward as ever lived. I never had any particular love for the De Veres, and might have kept the secret still, if I had not been hipped to death in this fashion. However, better late than never—eh, Lelia? And so you are going to be a countess, my girl, though you are old Nick Tempest's daughter?"

"Dear father, do not think of these things, now. Do try and compose your mind for the dread hereafter you are hastening to. Remember how short are the hours you have to live."

"The last act of the drama—isn't it Lelia? As for composing my mind, what good will that do? You don't suppose I expect to go to heaven—do you? No, as I have lived, I will die; so say no more about it. Have you sent for your sister, Lelia?"

"Yes, father; she will be here directly."

"And you—you will not leave me, Lelia, to the last—will you?"

"No, father."

"Ah! I am glad you can say father; I like to hear it from your lips. Do you know you look strangely like your mother-to-day, Lelia? There is the same look in your eyes I have often seen in hers. My poor lost Lelia! buried in the wide sea. Oh, that accursed wretch, Grizzle Howlet!"

"Do not think of her—do not speak of her. Here, drink this."

It contained a narcotic, and gradually he fell into a troubled, feverish slumber. Still he held Jacquetta's hand, as though, even in sleep, he feared to lose her, and at intervals murmured, brokenly, the name of Lelia.

Disbrow, in obedience to a whisper from Jacquetta, left the room in search of Augusta. He found her in her room, lying on

a couch, still weak and faint from the effects of her recent flight.

As gently and tenderly as might be, he unfolded the truth; but before he had finished speaking, she lay without life or motion on the floor, where she had sunk like a snow-wreath. Shocks of joy seldom kill, however; and he was too accustomed to see Augusta faint to be much alarmed by it now; so, bathing her temples and chafing her hands, he waited until she had recovered again.

"What is it—what have you told me?" she cried, clinging wildly to him.

"Good news, my dear Augusta; you may be happy once more."

"And he is not—is not?"

"Certainly not. You have been imposed upon from first to last by our fair friend, Madam Howlet. Cheer up, Augusta! Let me see you smile once more."

"I have almost forgotten the way. But, oh, cousin Alfred! if there should be some mistake; if the man—"

"This man is dying, Augusta, and in his sober senses; so there can be none. To make assurance doubly sure, however, I have sent my servant and a Bow-street runner in search of old Grizzle's brother, who knows the whole affair; so, in a short time, his testimony will convince you. Your husband is in Paris, and I will telegraph immediately to the Minister of Police, whom I know, to find him for us, and send him here; so, my dearest cousin, we will soon see our sister 'Lady Augusta' smiling and happy once more."

"He smiled brightly himself as he spoke; but Augusta dropped her head on his shoulder, and burst into tears."

"I will leave you alone," he said, gently. "When this man comes, I will send for you."

As he passed from the room, he met Norma ascending the stairs.

"Has any thing happened? You sent for me?" she said, with a startled look. "Jacquetta!"

"Is quite well; but an important matter has come to light, in which you are closely concerned. Perhaps I had better tell you before you go in. Captain Tempest is dying in the next room, and it was he desired to see you."

"Captain Tempest! Oh, my lord! does he know?"

"No, he does not know your secret. But, my dear Norma, that will you say when I tell you that you and Jacquetta are sisters?"

"Sisters! How? What do you mean, my lord?"

"That you had the same mother—Captain Tempest's wife. Do you know your mother's name, Norma?"

"It was Lelia. I do not remember her; but I saw it written in one of her books. But, oh, Lord Earncliffe! what have you told me? Captain Tempest's wife?"

"Your father was never married, Norma; and now you know why he never would speak of your mother. You and Jacquetta are sisters. A dying man affirms it. Do you doubt it, Norma?"

"Surely not. I covered her face with her hands for a moment, and when she took them away, she was deathly pale."

"No, my lord, strange as it seems, I yet do not doubt it. And this is why he wanted to see me? Oh, Alfred! I am glad—I am glad that I am Jacquetta's sister!"

"And so am I. Shall we go in now?"

"They entered together. Captain Nick still slept, but even the slightest noise of their entrance aroused him; and as his eyes fell on Norma, he uttered a faint exclamation."

"Ah! you have come! Come close and let me look at you. Yes, yes; you are Lelia's daughter. You look more like your dead mother than she does. Are you willing to acknowledge Nick Tempest's child as your sister, young lady?"

"Willingly, joyfully!"

And the fervent clasp in which she held Jacquetta told how truly she spoke.

"Tell your father—tell Randall Macdonald—I forgive him at last. He was not so much to blame as the she-devil who forced them both to it. Will you shake hands, young lady, for your mother's sake?"

She laid both her white, delicate hands in his large, brown palms, and a bright tear fell with them.

"For me," he said, with a look of wonder. "Ho! what noise is that? I ought to know that step."

A shuffling sound of feet was heard without. Disbrow threw open the door, and old Till, in charge of a policeman, stalked doggedly in.

"Hallo, old comrade!" said the captain. "Well met! You did not expect, when we parted this morning, to find me on the road to Davy's locker so soon. Where's the lady, Lelia?"

Even as he spoke, Disbrow entered with Augusta hanging, pale and trembling, on his arm.

"She is here. Now, my man, what is it you know concerning this young lady?" said Disbrow.

"You may as well make a clean breast of it, Till, for I have told already," said the captain. "Out with it!"

Still Till scowled at them in dogged silence from under his villainous brows.

"Tell, and you shall go free, and unharmed—I pledge you my word and honor. Refuse, and the walls of Newgate will hold you before an hour."

Old Till was, as Captain Nick said, a very white-livered hero, so he forthwith—rather sullenly, though—began the recital, adding that the father of young Durand was still alive, one of the wealthiest and most eminent lawyers in New York. And having made a deposition to that effect, and further informed them that he might be known by a peculiar tattooing in India ink on his arm, done when he was a child, he was allowed to take his departure.

Captain Nick was sinking fast. He had exerted himself to speak and listen while Till was present; but now he fell back exhausted on his pillow, a cold perspiration oozing over his face, a dark livid ring encircling his mouth. His eyes wandered slowly over the faces gathered round him, and rested at last on that of Jacquetta.

"Going!" he said, with a faint smile. "It is getting dark and cold, Lelia. Don't cry so. I will bring you no more squirrels to play with, as I used to do long ago—you were a child then, Lelia; now you are—"

"Father, father!" cried Jacquetta, through her fast-falling tears, as the hand she held grew cold, and a dull glaze crept over his eyes.

"My little Lelia!"

A strong shudder passed through his powerful frame, one arm was half-raised, and then dropped heavily by his side.

"Gone!" said Disbrow, as he bent over

him. "Come, Jacquetta, let us go: all is over now!"

And now, reader—my dear reader—draw a long breath of relief, as I do, for our tale is at an end. Perhaps, though, you would like one final peep behind the scenes before the curtain descends to rise no more. If so, it must be a very bird's-eye view, and very swiftly taken.

Look, then! One year has passed since the last act. And now the time is night; the scene, Disbrow Park. It is more like a glimpse of fairy-land than ever, this lovely night; for the whole stately mansion is one vast sheet of light. The beautiful fountains are sending vast jets of silver sparkling up in the serene moonlight, and the trees are bright with many-colored lamps, that twinkle like myriads of fire-flies, and give the whole scene an air of enchantment. The laurel walk is one blaze of illumination, and sweet, delicious strains of music rise, and fall, and float on the still night air. Carriage after carriage rolls up the broad avenue, and throngs of magnificently-dressed ladies and stately gentlemen pass into the marble hall. Lady Earncliffe has just returned from the "land of the free and the home of the brave"; has been presented at court; made a decided sensation; and tonight gives her first ball.

See her there in white velvet, frosted with seed-pearls, sparkling with jewels, and floating in filmy point-lace—the most bewitching, the most dazzling countess in the peerage—receiving her guests. And yet she is our own Jacquetta after all—the same sparkling little fairy as of yore. The short, dancing curls are of the old obnoxious hue; but a coronet becomes them wonderfully. The wicked gray eyes sparkle still with the old mocking light that was wont to madden a certain Captain Disbrow, and the little rosebud mouth is wreathed with the same entrancing smile that once drove the dashing guardsman to the verge of despair. And there she stands, as bright and self-possessed, receiving her titled guests in her husband's superb drawing-rooms, as when she stood, cold and defiant, before him, that morning when he met her first at old Fontelle.

He is there, too—the Earl of Earncliffe—handsome, graceful, and elegant as ever, watching her with a curious smile, as he thinks of the past. A happy man is Lord Earncliffe—as indeed he ought to be, with such a rent-roll and such a wife.

There is Lord George and Lady Austrey—he former, languid, nonchalant, and complacent as he strokes his mustache; the latter, one of the belles of the room, and so proud and so fond of her handsome young husband, and a powerful-lunged young scion of the aristocracy at home—who, of late, has made his debut into this vale of tears. And Lord George is so proud of that baby, though the feeling is mingled with a sort of deep awe, more particularly when it cries, which it sees fit to do pretty often; but no inducement can persuade him to handle it, "not being used to that sort of thing," as he informs its nurse.

Our dark-eyed friend, Orrie, is at school, and has a strong notion of growing up shortly, and marrying Frank—that young gentleman still writes U. S. N. after his name, and is pretty much of the same notion himself; so it is very probable Miss Orrie will be Mrs. Francis De Vere some day, in the "fulness of time."

It is a long step to New Jersey; but you and I, with our seven-league boots, can take it. At Fontelle still lives Mr. De Vere, happy in the happiness of his daughter and new-found son. And Mrs. Durand—how strange it seems to call Augusta that!—is as happy as the day is long; and feels it all the more after the fiery crucible through which she has passed.

Our old and estimable friend, Grizzle Howlet, having, with her two sons, committed an atrocious robbery, suddenly found the old inn too hot to hold her, and decamped for the far West with Blaise—the hopeful Kit being caught, and sentenced to prison for life. And since then nothing has ever been heard of her; and so, to both, *requiescat in pace*.

As for Mr. Rowlie and his cheery little help-meet, they kept the Mermaid for many a day after that; and that pleasant hotel thrived and flourished like a green bay tree. And if ever you visit the remote and facetious region of New Jersey, good friends of mine, just make a pilgrimage to its ruins, which tradition saith are to be seen to this day. And so, reader, farewell.

THE END.

The readers of the SATURDAY JOURNAL will be pleased to know that we have *Another Serial Romance* from the pen of COUSIN MAY CARLETON, which will be given in due season. It is one of this brilliant author's most enchanting stories, and will happily supplement THE DARK SECRET now just finished, and which has so interested our immense audience of readers.

**A Matrimonial Joke.**—Thirty years ago, when Charleston, Ills., was in an embryo state, Dick Stoddard was caught napping for the first time. Dick was at a country dance, and had been playing his tricks on the boys and girls, when it was proposed to enlist the company with a matrimonial scene. All things being ready, save the bride and groom, two very essential parts of the ceremony, they were soon procured in the persons of the aforesaid Dick and the beautiful and accomplished Miss —, the belle of the whole country, who, like Dick, was full of fun and of a romantic disposition. Those who managed this affair knew how to carry it out in detail. The license was easily procured, so was the justice. The ceremony was performed, and the bride and groom pronounced husband and wife. This, of course, was considered the joke of the season. Dick and his bride enjoyed it, so did the spectators. The justice, however, had performed the ceremony; had the license, and knew the penalty for a failure to return it as the law directs, and being sworn to discharge the duties incumbent upon him as a justice of the peace, was legally and morally bound to return the license to the county clerk, which he did, and where it is this day, with his certificate properly indorsed thereon to the effect that he had duly joined in the bonds of holy wedlock the parties aforesaid. Dick and his wife soon learned that what they had conceived to be a joke was a sad and joyful reality. So the matter was talked over, and they concluded to make the best of it. They have been living together ever since, blessed with a bountiful supply of this world's goods—a large family and a host of friends, and as Dick says, they have been enjoying the joke ever since, too.

**TO ADVERTISERS.**—A few Advertisements will be inserted on this page at the rate of fifty cents per line, nonpareil measurement.

## A GRAND STORY!

### THE FIRE-EATER;

#### OR, THE TEXAN'S REVENGE.

(BEADLE'S DIME NOVELS, No. 251.)

Now ready, and for sale by all newsvendors; or sent, post-paid, to any address, on receipt of price—TEN CENTS.

BEADLE AND COMPANY, PUBLISHERS, 93 William Street, N. Y.

## RUPTURE

Cured by Dr. Sherman's Patent Appliance and Rupture Curative, without the injury experienced from the use of trusses. Pamphlets, illustrating bad cases of Rupture, before and after cure, with other information of interest to the ruptured, mailed on receipt of ten cents. Address 53-ly. Dr. J. A. SHERMAN, 607 Broadway, N. Y.

Send Stamp for "Illustrated Book of Wonders." Address B. FOX & CO., 308 Canal Street, New York City.

## AGENTS! AGENTS! AGENTS!!

We will pay \$40 per week IN CASH, and expenses, to good agents who will engage with us at once. Every thing furnished. Address 104-4-ly. F. A. ELLS & CO., Charlotte, Mich.

**AGENTS WANTED.**—Agents make more money at work for us than at any other place. Particulars free. G. S. Sisson & Co., Fine Art Publishers, Portland, Maine. 94-ly.

**ART OF FASCINATING.**—By a French lady. How to compel Love, Constancy, Respect and Admiration. This great secret sent for 10 cents. Address HENRY & CO., 36 Liberty Street, New York. 105-2-ly.

## OLD FORT DUQUESNE

Is the name of a strong and thrilling historical tale of the French-Indian War, commenced in March number of PEOPLE'S MONTHLY, of Pittsburgh, Pa.—the best and finest illustrated paper for the Industrial Classes ever published; hence its immense circulation. Wonderful liberal premiums offered. Agents on big commission wanted in every shop, mill and factory. From five to ten dollars a day made by live men. Sent on trial 3 months for 25 cents. Address PEOPLE'S MONTHLY, Pittsburgh. Price \$1.50 per year, in advance. 106-1-ly.

**MYSTERY!**—By sending 35c. and date of birth, I will send you a correct picture of your future husband or wife, with name, and date of marriage; also the *Mysteries of Love, Courtship and Marriage* sent. Address D. C. CUTLER, Carthage, Illinois. 106-4-ly.

**ASTOUNDING REVELATIONS!**—A written Chart of your whole life, past, present and future, with a beautiful and correct picture, name and address of future husband or wife, by the greatest living astrologer. Inclose 25 cents. State date of birth. Address R. S. LYFORD, Box 42, Jersey City, N. J. 96-2-ly.

## POPULAR HAND-BOOKS,

PUBLISHED BY

Beadle and Company, 93 William St., N. Y.

### DIME SCHOOL-BOOKS.





## THE OTHER VILLAGE BLACK-SMITH.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

Under the spreading beechen tree  
The village smithy stands,  
The smith is a jolly man in he  
With six or seven hands,  
And the muscles of his brawny arms  
Are strong as two brass bands.  
A very splendid broadcloth coat  
That never had a spot,  
With collar made of velvet soft  
From New York city brought,  
And buttons of the latest style—  
In truth he hasn't got.  
But a white bosom neatly ironed  
As if to take to fairy,  
Transcendent with the utmost starch  
And diamond sets in pairs,  
And of the finest linen made—  
In fact he never wears.  
From dewy morn to thirty night  
You hear his anvil peal—  
The most outrageous jingling  
That ever made you reel,  
Till you could have him taken up  
For forging notes of steel.  
This blacksmith, most industrious,  
Is very fond of noise,  
And on a Sunday goes to church  
To hear his daughter's voice,  
And finds it great delight to sit  
Among his whistling boys.  
He wears an honest smutty face,  
I wish that he could thrive  
Without his trade, and turn to be  
The laziest man alive,  
For every morning of the year  
He wakes me up at five!

## The Mid-Ocean Mutiny.

BY WALTER A. ROSE.

THIS fine clipper-barque Asteroid, owned and commanded by Captain Hiram Nashby, had been successfully engaged cruising about among the South Pacific islands for nearly eighteen months, when, on her passage back to the port of Salem, from whence she hailed, she put into Rio Janeiro, Brazil, for provisions.

During her detention, the second-mate, who had long been ailing, died, and, as I chanced to be out of employment at the time, the ship in which I had come to Rio having been condemned, I immediately made application for and obtained the vacant position.

Even before the Asteroid sailed, I had reason to feel well pleased with my berth, for Captain Nashby was a genial, kindly old fellow; and his only daughter—who, since the death of her mother always accompanied her father on his voyages—fully realized my beau ideal of feminine perfection. Mr. Hatch, the chief-mate, was also a quiet, agreeable sort of man, and a good sailor to boot, though I soon perceived that he allowed the crew too much scope to be consistent with discipline, for I have invariably found that you must always keep a very tight rein upon Jack, if you wish him to be orderly and obedient.

Soon after leaving Rio, we encountered a series of those squalls for which the Brazilian coast is famous, but, afterward, we experienced favorable weather until we reached the equator, in the vicinity of which we were long delayed by calms.

The heat was excessive, so Miss Nashby spent most of her time on deck, thereby affording me considerable gratification, for she was a charming conversationalist and rendered pleasant by her presence many a watch which would otherwise have been to me but a dreary vigil. A bright-eyed, sweet-faced, soft-voiced darling was Ellen Nashby, and she shone upon the rugged pathway of my life like a golden sunbeam, banishing dark shadows, wakening into new life expiring aspirations.

But, though I soon learned to love her, I was too diffident to woo, for I felt my inferiority and feared to jeopardize the friendship I had gained by seeking openly to win her affections; therefore I carefully avoided, either by word or deed, giving expression to the passion pent within my breast.

I was not at all satisfied with the seamen of the Asteroid; they were a rough, uncouth lot of fellows, the off-scourings of an Australian port, whose services the skipper had been compelled to accept in lieu of those of his former crew, every member of which had deserted, in order to try their luck on the gold-fields of Ballarat. They were pretty good sailors, however, so I seldom came to an open rupture with them; but, before we were a month out of port, I noticed that some secret understanding existed among them, and my suspicions became fully aroused when, during the second dog-watch one evening, I chanced to overhear portions of a conversation four of them were maintaining on the top-gallant forecastle.

"We all of us knows the shiners is aboard, anyhow, for most of us have lent a hand ter h'ist 'em in at one time or another, and we can easy find out where the old man's stowed 'em, for cases o' dollars is allus alike. It'll be easy as kiss my hand ter capter the barkey, for neither the skipper or mates has any 'spicions of our game," said Bill Reynolds, a dark-skinned, low-browed scoundrel, who had shipped as carpenter.

"Well, chips, we've got all that thing fixed long ago, and it's all cut and dried what's to be done with the vessel; but, what about the gal? She's too purty to be chucked to the fishes," remarked Jim Varian, a man one degree less repulsive than Reynolds.

"What's that to you? I'll fix the lass off when the time comes. She'll—hark! She was sartilly the queerest old hooker as ever I set foot aboard of, and yet she was a good ship for grub too."

The carpenter had caught sight of my shadow, as the moon emerged from behind a sable cloud, so he adroitly changed the conversation; but I had heard enough to convince me that some diabolical plot to seize the vessel was hatching, and I determined to lose no time in communicating my suspicions to my superior officers. To my great astonishment, Captain Nashby laughed at my fears.

"I guess the men knew you were near to them, and were 'giving you away' for a joke. The treasure-boxes which I have on board contain only minerals and some sea-shells. I promised a conchologist at home, and the crew know that, I am sure. I'm not such a fool as to carry large sums about in an unarmed vessel; I've sent every cent home by mail," he said.

Of course, after that, I could say no more; but I felt no less uneasy in my mind, not so much for my own sake as for that of the bright girl, whose fate, if the crew captured the vessel, I knew would be a hard one, indeed.

Like most American merchant ships, the Asteroid was but poorly supplied with fire-

arms, and the only weapons upon which I knew we could rely in case of trouble were the three revolvers owned by the captain, mate and myself. The steward possessed a good one also, but he was a mulatto and not to be trusted, so I took occasion to abstract it one day and secrete it in my own berth. Still watchful, my suspicions were daily increased by the conduct of the crew; they were unusually civil and obedient, but silent, and this I regarded as a dangerous phase.

I became so anxious at last that I determined to place the power of defending herself in case of necessity within Miss Nashby's reach; so, one morning, when she was conversing with me, I carelessly asked her if her berth leaked.

"No, Mr. Horton, not a drop of water ever comes in, unless I omit to close one of the ports; but why do you ask?" she said.

"Because mine is very damp—the deck above wants caulking—and I have a handsome revolver that I fear will be spoiled by rust if it remains in my room. I value the weapon, for it was presented to me, and I wanted to ask you if you would mind taking care of it for me until we reach port," I replied.

"Certainly I will, with the greatest pleasure. Is it loaded?" she inquired.

"Yes, all ready for use. By the by, Miss Nashby, did you ever fire a pistol?" I asked.

"Frequently, and I am quite a good shot," she answered.

An hour later the revolver was hanging over her bunk and I felt a little more at ease.

Captain Nashby had acquired a habit of sleeping during the afternoon, so he seldom retired to his berth before midnight; but, in fine weather, paced the deck with the officer on duty. His daughter usually sought her bed at eleven p. m.

One night, when the Asteroid was a few degrees to the south-west of the Bermudas, Mr. Hatch had the first watch, so I turned in at nine o'clock, for I had been working pretty hard all day, and, knowing I should

none on us ever seen her since, tho' I s'arched for her, seein' she war a likely gal an' true grit," replied the scoundrel.

"My poor darling," I involuntarily ejaculated as I sunk back upon my pillow; "perhaps, after all, it is better so—you have gone pure and spotless to your heavenly home!"

The mutineers appreciated the value of my services too highly to permit me to die; they gave me stimulants and nursed me so carefully that, in a few days, I was able to move about.

Then Dennis, the ringleader, demanded that I should navigate the vessel to Bermuda. This I positively refused to do, asserting that directly they sighted the island they would put me out of the way, which, I remarked, they might just as well do at once. Sweet Ellen was dead, what value then had life for me? The scoundrels saw how determined I was, and, knowing their inability to dispense with my services, registered most terrible vows that they would spare my life if I obeyed their behest. I chose to believe them, trusting that chance might enable me to deliver them over to authorities who would mete out to them punishment for their misdeeds.

Soon after sunrise, on the morning of the eighth day subsequent to the meeting, the man on the look-out reported land ahead.

"There is Bermuda; I have fulfilled my part of the contract; do you intend to do the same?" I said, to Dennis.

"Ha! ha! of course I do; no one shall lay a finger onter yer," he replied.

The miscreant prepared the long-boat for use, placing plenty of provisions within her, and the cases which they fondly believed contained specie. When the Asteroid was within thirty miles of the land, they cut with an ax a large hole in her starboard bows, through which the water rushed in torrents—then they descended into their boat and shoved off from the ship's side.

"Good-by, matey; we kep' our words; no one ain't laid a finger onter yer!" cried Dennis; "but I reckon yer won't be able

return, she informed me that, after she slew Reynolds, she had immediately descended into the lazarette for safety. By listening at the grating, she had overheard the mutineers speak of the affray, had learned that her father was slain, but that my life had been spared. Loving me well, she had determined to live for me, so had secreted herself among the sails and sustained existence with preserved meats and wines which were in the store-room.

With Ellen's aid, I hauled forward a spare topmast-studding sail. I then lowered one end-of, of course, it was rolled up—over the ship's side and lowered myself down in a bowline. As the vessel rose on a wave, I thrust the sail into the hole the mutineers had made, and the next instant had the satisfaction of seeing it drawn in by the suction until it jammed, and rendered almost water-tight the orifice. After I had lashed it in its place, Ellen helped me to pump the greater part of the water out of the Asteroid's hold. The wound I had received at Nellie's hand was but a very slight one, after all, and I was easily able to work the vessel to the entrance to the harbor of St. George, when a signal for assistance brought a boat from a British man-of-war to our aid. The ship was safely anchored, and the coast scoured for the mutineers. Their boat was found capsized and broken, but their fate was never ascertained.

Within a month, the Asteroid, repaired, re-manned, and under my command, was re-pursuing her way toward Salem, and upon her deck, though attired in deep mourning, stood a bright-faced bride—my darling Ellen.

RED HAND, a prophet of the Pute Indians, has lifted the veil, and gazed into futurity. He is satisfied from what he saw, and accordingly announces that we shall soon have a flood "like the one 1,870 years ago, when it rained forty days and forty nights, and all the people got into the big boat built by Columbus."



Tracked to Death—"Your name is not Philip Quantrell: it is Richard Darke!"

have to go on deck at midnight, I desired to get as much repose as possible. But the sleep I coveted and courted would not come and drown my senses, and, as I lay tossing in my bunk, I could plainly hear the measured tread of the skipper and mate upon the deck above. Then six bells struck, and I heard Miss Nashby quit the saloon for her berth. I tried hard to compose myself for sleep, and was just sinking into a doze, when two shots, fired in rapid succession, followed by a piercing shriek, caused me to spring from my bunk and draw my revolver, or rather the steward's, from the place where it reposed.

I had just cocked it when the door of my berth was burst violently in and Varian stood before me with a long knife upraised to strike my life away. Quick as lightning, I fired and the villain fell, shot through the heart, his death-cry echoed by that of Reynolds, whom brave Ellen had slain while he was in the act of entering her room.

I rushed up the cabin companion-way and gained the deck, prone upon which I saw lying the stiffening corpses of poor Captain Nashby and Mr. Hatch. Only a glance at them was allowed me, for the next moment I dropped insensible beside them, felled by a terrible blow from a handspike in the hands of one of the mutineers.

When I regained consciousness, I found myself lying upon a settee in the saloon and a burly villain, named Dennis, sitting near me.

"So yer've come to at last, hev yer," he muttered, with an oath. "I thought I'd put the kybosh a little tew strong on yer, an' that wouldn't hev suited us nobow."

"Why have you spared me?" I groaned.

"Cos thet (adjective) gal o' the skipper's give Bill Reynolds a lead pill thet made him pass in his checks, an' now there ain't an (adjective) one among us as knows aught about navigashun. So we nussed yer up, so as yer ken take us whar we're bound ter."

"Where is Miss Nashby?" I anxiously inquired.

"She sp'iled herself, I reckon; must 'a' jumped overboard arter she shot Bill, for

ter fetch the (adjective) old hooker inter part."

I thought I'd try to keep her afloat as long as possible, however, in the hope that some vessel might heave in sight, and, in answer to my signals, come to my rescue; therefore I ran down into the fore-peak to ascertain the exact state of affairs. An orifice over a foot square had been hewn in the ship's bow, and the water was gushing through it in a broad, strong stream that threatened to sink the ship in less than two hours' time. It would be useless to attempt to stop the hole from the inside, but I thought that if I could manage to insert a spare top-sail from the outside, I might stay the flow.

The sail-room was just about the lazarette, or store-room, the lattice-work hatch of which was in the passage between the saloon and ladies' cabin. I took a lamp, for it was dark as Erebus below, lifted the grating and descended. Setting the lamp on a flour-barrel, I entered the sail-room. No sooner had I set foot inside than the darkness was illumined by a vivid flash, and I felt a sharp, stinging sensation in my left shoulder. I uttered a cry of pain and astonishment, as I stumbled and fell over a pile of sails.

"God have mercy upon me!" cried a voice which I instantly recognized as that of Nellie Nashby. "I have shot my only friend!"

The sweet girl fell on her knees beside me, in an agony of despair.

"Oh! Mr. Horton—Harry—speak to me, I implore you; tell me you forgive me. I thought that demon Dennis had discovered my hiding-place and had come to seek me. Oh, Harry—my love—my love!"

She threw her arms around my neck and covered my face with kisses, while her silken tresses fanned my brow; and I, reviving from surprise, close-pressed her to my breast and returned with fervor her caresses, while I told her how little injury her bullet had inflicted, and how I was glad it had been fired, seeing that it had revealed our mutual affection.

In a few words, I made her acquainted with all that had lately transpired, and, in

## Border Reminiscences.

A Life for a Life.

BY RALPH RINGWOOD.

"You may talk of men being grateful," said my friend "Bruin" Adams, one night by the camp-fire: "but if I were to look for the true, the Simon Pure feeling, I should hunt up some woman to whom a great kindness, perhaps the saving of her child's life, had been done."

"Gratitude as experienced, or felt, by men, is what you might call a mixed affair, something always underlying it; but when one of the fairer sex has had reason to say, 'I thank you,' you may rest assured her whole heart is in those words."

"You are enthusiastic," I said.

"And I have reason to be so, Ralph," he replied. "Why, it is owing to this very fact of 'woman's gratitude' that I am sitting alongside of you to-night."

"How was it?" I asked.

"Well, I will tell you. It won't take long—not longer, anyway, than will be required for the horses to prepare themselves for the night-work that lies before them."

"You remember hearing me speak of having accidentally stumbled upon a couple of Sioux warriors who had a prisoner—a woman—in charge, and how I, by good luck, mortally wounded both of them at one shot, and set the captive free."

"Yes; well, three years after, that same woman saved my life, at the expense of her own."

"She was the daughter of a pioneer by the name of Randal, who had recklessly ventured to locate almost in the heart of the Sioux country, and the natural consequence was that he had his cabin burned over his head on two occasions; his wife killed on one of them, and his daughter, an only child, captured on both."

"The first time I set her free, and the second time she did the same for me."

"But now for the story. I had parted from

uncle Grizzly in the morning, and at night-fall found myself some distance from the camp, having struck the trail of a fine buck, and consumed the whole day in trying to come up with and get a shot at him.

"Finally I gave the job up as a bad one, and reluctantly turned back. While on the return path, and in passing around a motte of timber, I was surprised by a small war-party of Sioux, and captured."

"They carried me back into the brush a little way, to where they had their camp, and you may imagine my surprise when I saw, tied by her hands to a small sapling, the same girl I had rescued three years before. She recognized me in a moment, though only by a significant motion of her head, so quickly made as to escape the Indians' eyes."

"But, that mattered little, as, by some means, they recognized me as the person who had slain their comrades, for this same woman's sake, and they evidently intended taking a swift and sure revenge."

"They talked the matter over freely among themselves, and by close attention I was enabled to learn that they proposed roasting me early next morning."

"I was at once 'spread eagled'—a manner of securing a prisoner from which, as you know, there is little or no hope of escape—and having 'fixed me,' they replenished the fire, looked to the woman's bonds, and laid down to sleep until daylight."

"You may rest assured that I slept but little, if any; for seeing the necessity of doing something, I spent the time in uselessly tugging at the lashings that confined my arms and legs."

"The time slipped rapidly by."

"Already the first flashings of the coming dawn were plainly visible in the east, and yet I had not advanced one inch toward freedom."

"All at once I heard a low 'hiss' directly behind me, and by twisting my head around, I saw that the girl had freed herself from the tree to which she had been tied, but had not yet succeeded in releasing her ankles from their lashings of raw hide."

As I looked she was just in the act of drawing the scalp-knife from a sleeping savage's girdle, and the next instant the weapon was sawing away at the thongs that held my wrists."

"In a moment they were cut, and the knife placed in my hand. To cut the remaining cords took but a moment, and then I was free."

"Lying quiet a moment, until circulation should be in some degree restored, for I knew that rapid action might be necessary in a very short time, I slowly rose to my feet, and, stepping over to cut the thongs that still confined her ankles."

"All this time the Indians had remained perfectly still; their sleep was unbroken, and I saw a hope of both getting clear. But that hope was short-lived."

"As I reached over to sever the bonds, a startling yell suddenly broke the silence of the night, and at the same time I received a stunning blow that sent me reeling across the open and right into the brands of the smoldering fire."

"I was to my feet in an instant, but only in time to see the warrior, upon whom the brave girl had thrown herself—clinging to him like a very wildcat—whirl his tomahawk aloft, and sink it to the eye in her brain."

"The whole camp was, of course, alarmed, and the warriors were springing to their arms. I saw the girl was past all aid from me, or any other earthly power; so I sprang into the chapparal, and, after a long, hot chase, succeeded in eluding my pursuers."

"But, I marked the savage that killed the devoted girl, and in less than a month he went on the long journey to the hunting-grounds."

"Now, that's what I call practical gratitude, and you won't find one man in a thousand who would thus have actually thrown away his life to save that of another, who had done him a kindness."

I did not discuss the question with my friend, for I was clearly of his belief.

## Short Stories from History.

• A Daring Act.—An instance of daring enterprise almost without parallel occurred at the bridge of Inspruck in the Tyrol, during the late war. Steep rocks, fringed with brushwood, rose above the bridge on the southern side, which the Tyrolese occupied. From these rocks they kept up an irregular fire on the French infantry, who were endeavoring to make their way through the defile; and so great was the slaughter, that in a very short time the road was literally blocked up with dead bodies.

In this emergency an officer of the Bavarian dragoons volunteered to gallop over the bridge with his squadron, and dispossess the peasantry who occupied the cliffs. The Tyrolese, perceiving the cavalry winding up the ascent, set fire to the bridge, and, in a very short time, the flames spread rapidly along the fir beams on which it was supported.

Not deterred, however, by this circumstance, nor by the dreadful fire which the peasantry directed toward this point, the brave horseman pressed forward, and spurring his horse with much difficulty over the dead bodies of his comrades, dashed into the midst of the flames.

The eyes of both armies were anxiously turned upon this brave man, and the hoofs of his horse were just touching the rocks on the opposite side, when the burning rafters broke, and he was precipitated from an immense height into the torrent beneath.

A momentary pause, and a cessation from firing, ensued, till the heavy splash in the deep ravine below announced his fate; and instantly a loud shout from the Tyrolese army re-echoed through the impending rocks, announced to the neighboring valleys that the French army was stopped at the important defile. Thus had a most important result been achieved through the heroism and daring of a single individual.